

A CULTURAL STUDY OF THE VIJAYANAGARA COINS

Thesis to be submitted to the
SRI VENKATESWARA UNIVERSITY
in partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY, CULTURE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

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This is to certify that the thesisentitled **“A CULTURAL STUDY OF THE VIJAYANAGARA COINS”** submitted by **Mr. KARAMTHUR VENKATESU NAIK**, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**, is a bonafide research work done under my supervision. The thesis has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree or diploma or similar other title of this University or any other University or other institution.

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DECLARATION

I here by declare that the thesis entitled “**A CULTURAL STUDY OF THE VIJAYANAGARA COINS**” submitted to Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati for the award of the Degree of Ph.D., in Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology is an original and independent work done by me and has not formed the basis for the award of any other degree, diploma or other similar title.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am greatly beholden to my Research Supervisor **Dr. V. Sakunthamma**, Professor of Ancient Indian History Culture and Archaeology, who spared no pains in guiding me in my research work. Without his constant and keen interest and his enlightening discussions it would not have been possible to me to complete my research work and submit the thesis in its present form.

I express my sincere thanks to **Prof. V. Sakunthamma**, Head of the Department, **Prof. N. Krishna Reddy**, (BOS Chairman), **Prof. P. Bhaskar Reddy**, **Dr. D. KiranKranthChoudary**, Professor Emeritus, **Prof. P.N. Naidu (Retd.)** and **Prof. K. Reddeppa (Retd.)** for their help in course of my research work.

I sincerely thank **Dr. P. V. Radhakrishnan**, Curator, RBI Monetary Museum, Mumbai, **Prof. N. Narayana Reddy**, (Retd.), Tirupati, **Dr. J. SujanaMallika**, RJD-Kadapa, for their words of encouragement in course of my research work.

I am grateful to the authorities of the **University Grants Commission, New Delhi (Rajiv Gandhi NationalFellowship)** for providing me financial assistance to carry out my research work.

I am also thankful to the authorities of Indian Institute of Research in Numismatic Studies, Anjaneri, Nasik, S.V.U. Oriental Research Institute, S.V. University Library and SVETA Library for allowing me to use books and Journals in their libraries in course of my research work.

I am ever grateful and indebted to my beloved parents **Smt. K. Sarojamma & K. Pakkirappa** for their unstinted support and encouragement in course of preparing my thesis which has been their dream. My thanks are due to my sister **V. Lakshmidēvi**, brother-in-law **V. LakshmeNaik**, and Cousins **V. VenkateshNaik** and **V. VamsiNaik** for their constant encouragement in course of my work.

Finally, I am very thankful to my beloved friends & co-research scholars **Ms. D. Sridevi, B. Thanuja, N. Vinodh, Dr. P. Hema, Dr. D. Govindulu, Dr. M. Vijaya Kumar Reddy, Dr. N. Kiran Kumar, Dr. P. Sivaiah, Dr. M. Subbaiah, Dr. M. Hari Kumar, D. Maddilety, S. Veerabhadra, Dr. V. NagendraNaik, Dr. B. Ashok, Dr. G. Obulesu, Dr. K.P. TirupalNaik, P. SreeramNaik, H. Govindu and L. Babu** for their encouragement in course of my research work.

Last but not least I extend my sincere thanks to **Sri. K. Murali Krishna, Senior. Asst., Sri. T. Gajendra Naidu, Sri. P. Dwarakanatha Reddy, Officer Subordinate** for their help in course of my research work.

Station: Tirupati.

Date : May, 2015.

(**KARAMTHUR VENKATESU NAIK**)

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ABBREVIATIONS

ARE	: Annual Report on Epigraphy
ARMAD	: Annual Report of Mysore Archaeological Department
EA	: EpigraphiaAndhrica
EC	: EpigraphiaCarnataka
EI	: EpigraphiaIndica
IA	: Indian Antiquary
JAHRS	: Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society
JNSI	: Journal of Numismatic Society of India
MAR	: Mysore Archaeological Report
MG	: Mysore Gazzetteers
ND	: Numismatic Digest
NI	: NumismaticaIndica
PAPHC	: Proceedings of the Andhra Pradesh History Congress
SCR	: Southern Circle Reports
SIE	: South Indian Epigraphy
SII	: South Indian Inscriptions
SSIC	: Studies in South Indian Coins
TTDI	: TirumalaTirupatiDevasthanams Inscriptions
TTDER	: TirumalaTirupatiDevasthanamsEpigraphical Reports

VII. INS : Vijayanagara inscriptions

VSCV : Vijayanagara Sexcentenary Commemoration Volume.

Chapter - II

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section deals with a brief introduction to Hinduism and origin of Saivism in brief and Saiva symbols that appeared on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers. The second section discusses about the Vaishnavism and Vaishnava gods and goddesses engraved on the coins.

Hinduism

Hinduism has been the faith of millions since the days of the *Vedas*. Scholars in various ways have interpreted the name *Hindu*, but the real meaning is Him (i.e., *Himsa* or violence), *du* (du, for ‘from’). It means people who keep away from violence.

The Hindus have been praying since ages for peace and prosperity of all the worlds. The rituals and rites, ceremonies and vows prescribed in Hinduism are all directed to the promotion of the well-being of all the worlds. (*Samastha-loka-sukhino-bhavanthu*).

The *Vedas* have been identified, from time immemorial, as the fountainhead of all Hindu culture. The Hindus have a treasure house of knowledge in the form of four *Vedas*, viz. *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Samaveda* and *Atharvanaveda*. The *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda* and *Samaveda* deal with gods and sacrifices, the *Atharvanaveda* deal with man, his protection from harmful adversaries, welfare in life and similar aspects. The end of the *Vedas* contain philosophical preaching’s called the *Upanishads* or *Vedanta*. *Vedic* religion was one of the aspects of *Vedic* civilization which include ideals, society, education, economic life, languages and literature, arts and philosophy, medical sciences, polity and other sciences. The purpose of human life in *Vedic* civilization is narrated in the *Puranas* as the four *purusharthas*, namely *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*. *Vedic* religion was a guiding principle for the conduct of individual life. The entire *Vedic* literature may be cited as primary sources of *dharma*. There were further interpretations of this literature called *Smritis*.

The fundamentals of *Vedic* religion comprise certain unshakable beliefs. They include belief in divine power endowed in different gods and goddess as Brahma as Creator, Vishnu as Protector Siva as Extinguisher of the universe, besides the goddess Sarasvati, Lakshmi, Parvati, Lalitha, Sun, Moon, Ganapati, Kumara, and deified spirits dwelling in rivers, hills, fire, water and earth and so on. In fact, there is no object in the

universe which is not permeated by the Divine. “*Isa vasyam Idam Sarvam*”. The subordinate gods *Indra*, *Agni*, *Yama*, *Varuna*, *Vayu*, *Kubera* and the host of others are invoked in sacrifices and other rituals. The *dharmaśāstras* particularly the *Puranas*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, laid down some beliefs like belief in virtue (*punya*) and sin (*papa*) belief in rebirth, performance of timely rituals for departed souls (*pitrs*) and family deities.

Agamas like *Saiva*, *Vaishnava* and *Sakhya* literature deal with the divinities and types of worship, temple architecture, iconography, sculpture, auspicious occasions, material for worship etc. These works are also known as *tantrasāstras* and they prescribe the mode of installation of the respective deities in temples with specific *yantras* and *mantras*. The *Agamas* formed basis for the development of *bhakti* or devotional practices including fine arts like music, dance and political aesthetic expressions.

South India witnessed great heights in political and cultural fields which it had not witnessed earlier and hence the Vijayanagara period is referred to as the ‘golden age of South Indian history’. This appellation is justified on the basis of the rich variety of gold coins which were issued by the kings of this dynasty. Majority of the historians have agreed that the aim and purpose of the foundation of this Empire was to bring back the glory of Hinduism and Hindu *dharma*¹.

During the Vijayanagara period, sage Vidyaranya revived the lost glory of the Vedic and *Puranic* religion which suffered a lot, almost to the point of extinction, as a result of repeated Muslim invasions over the southern kingdoms. As the *guru* or teacher of the Sangama brothers Harihara I and Bukkaraya I, he inspired them to establish a new kingdom first at Anagondi and later at Vijayanagara in 1336 A. D. In a short period it grew into a mighty empire, which lasted more than three centuries under the patronage of great rulers, viz. two Harihararayas, two Bukkarayas, two Devarayas, two Narasimharayas, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutadevaraya, Sadasivaraya, Venkatapathiraya and others. The *VedicPuranic* religion flourished in all its aspects and *Vedic* studies, rituals, art, architecture, regional languages, literature, fine arts, *ayurveda*, the philosophical ponderings as contemplated by the sage Vidyaranya all thrived. Vidyaranya initiated a

great project for writing the *bhashyas* (commentaries) on the four *Vedas*, viz., the *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Samaveda* and *Atharvanaveda*.

Vidyaranya invited eminent scholars in the *Vedas* and *Sastras* from all over the country by offering, them *agraharas* or villages as grants. In the Kraku grant of Harihara II dated A. D., 1376 it is mentioned that one *agrahara* was given to 63 *Brahmanas* well versed in the *Vedas* and *Sastras* including *Jyotisha* and *Ayurveda*. The gift village is situated in Pakanadu² (present Ongole-Nellore border region near Kavali) An inscription at Srisailam refers to Harihara II with the titles, *Rajavyasa*, *rajavalmiki*, and states that he composed the *Vedabhashya* to be written³ and he also supported the *Saiva* and *Vaishnava* creeds alike.

Harihara II granted villages to the scholars, who helped the sage Vidyaranya in writing the commentaries or *Bhashyas* on the *Vedas*⁴. Vidyaranya and Sainacharya wrote some books on “*Parasara Smriti* called *Parasara Madhaviya rayaschitta Sudhanidhi Yajnatanttra Suddhanidhi*”.

All *Dharmasastras*, *Agamas*, *Puranas*, *Itihasas* and a major part of the *Kavya* literature, directly or indirectly, preached *Vedicdharma*. During the Vijayanagara period the sacrificial *dharma* was intended for *Vedic* scholars and household rituals took first place for the common man visiting temples and undertaking pilgrimages, enjoying entertainment through folk art, participating in academic activities etc. which played a large role in propagating *Vedic* religion among the people of all classes, in an *Agamic* way.

The religious conditions of the period were such that it gave an opportunity for all religions to thrive on their own accord without hindering the promotions of other religions. Saivism and Vaishnavism, the two major religions of south India which had uneasy relations in the earlier period, now flourished side by side. Grants to *Saiva* and *Vaishnava* temples were given alike. Some rulers were more inclined towards *Virasaivism* of Basavanna. We do not hear of any quarrels between the followers of this faith and other. The only religious misunderstanding during this period was between *Jainas* and *Srivaishnavas* but it was amicably settled by Bukkaraya I.

Another important factor was the harmonious development of the three schools of *Vedanta*, viz. *Advaita*, *Dvaita* and *Visistadvaita* during the period. Vidyaranya of the *Advaitamatha* of Sringeri, Madhvacharya of *Dvaitamatha* and Vedanta Desika of the *Visistadvaita* received equal respect and regard from Vijayanagara rulers though Vidyaranya was the spiritual leader of the foundation of the Vijayanagara Empire. Tolerance of different schools of spirituals thoughts was reflected in the coinage of the period.

Section I

Coins are one of the prime materials, apart from sculptures, to know the religious history of a region⁵. The Vijayanagara coins were intact even today because of the symbols of gods and goddesses. The sculptures representing various gods and goddesses and the symbols of worship on the walls and in the pillars temples of Vijayanagara period certainly helps us to know the religious history of the period.

SAIVISM

Hinduism is distinctly different from other religions because of holding an incomparable form of Monism in accompaniment with the idea of other deities as subordinate to the non-dual Supreme Spirit. Every cult of the Hindus gives a particular name to this Supreme Spirit, holding all other gods and goddesses as His or Her agents. Saivism is the religion of such a cult which holds Lord Siva as the Supreme Spirit, pervading the entire universe with His bigger form⁶.

Saivism, or the worship of the god Siva, was an important cult which claimed a large number of adherents among the people in ancient India. Unfortunately, the history of this cult from pre-historic times down to the early centuries of Christian era is somewhat obscure⁷.

The origin of this cult can be traced to hoary antiquity. The archaeological remains unearthed at the pre-historic sites of the Indus valley prove the prevalence of this cult among the pre-Aryan people of India. Almost all the qualities that have been attributed to Siva in the later ages are found in nucleus form in the seals and objects discovered there.

The people of Mohenjadarro worshipped a male deity who may be regarded as the prototype of Siva. He is represented as seated in a yoga posture, surrounded by animals, and as bearing three visible faces with two horns on two sides of a tall head-dress⁸.

Numismatic evidence discloses that the indigenous and foreign rulers who flourished in the pre-Christian and in the early centuries of the Christian era were staunch supporters of this cult. J. Marshall, in course of his excavations at Sirkap site (Taxila), unearthed a bronze seal of the first century B. C. The seal contains the figure Siva and the legend 'Sivaraksitasa' in Brahmi and devout follower of Siva as his name 'one protected by Siva' alone would suffice to indicate. The Bull as Siva's symbol is represented on some of the early Yaudheya and Arjunayana coins, while the trident (*trisula*) is depicted on the coins of Rudragupta, the Panchala king⁹.

Worship of Siva in *Linga* form appears on the coins of early un-inscribed *cost* coin issued from the Gangetic plain. Cunningham¹⁰ and Allan¹¹ attributed this coin as a *linga* erected on a pedestal. The anthropomorphic motif of Siva appeared on the copper coins of Kuninda for the first time. These coins depict the standing Siva facing holding trident with axe in his right hand and the left hand is on the hip with pouch of coins, hanging on the obverse and a deer standing to the left. On Ujjaini coin, a three headed standing figure is depicted with club in the right hand. According to J. N. Banerjea this is the earliest iconographic representation of three headed Siva¹².

The most interesting icon of Siva, along with bull standing behind, is depicted on the gold coin of the Kushana king Wima Kadphises¹³, Kanishka and Huvishka, the successors of Wima Kadphises also issued coin, with standing Siva along with all his attributes.

Saivism and its different sub-sects were fully developed by the beginning of the Gupta period and Siva images and various *Saiva* symbols were objects of worship. The early rulers of the Imperial Gupta dynasty were generally ardent devotees of Vishnu, but at least one later member of the family, i.e. Vinayagupta to judge from the evidence of the Gunaighar copper plate grant, was a devotee of Siva¹⁴.

During the Vijayanagara period significant changes accrued in the fortunes of *Saiva* sects. Bhikshavrithi matha was the sole institution which influenced the rulers of Karnataka and Andhra. The inscriptions from A. D., 1320 onward at Vutukuru, Tripuranthakam, Basireddi Palli, Pushpagiri, Rayalacheruvu and Pedda Mudiyam etc.(A. D. 1551) refers to the dominance of Virasaivas. These inscriptions refer to the Acharyas, Shaddarsana Sthapanacharya Virasaiva Siddha Bhikshavrithi ayyavaru at Vutukuru, and Aghorasivacharya Ayyavaru at Somireddi Palli (A. D. 1403). The kingdoms of Gutti and Gandikota were principal areas of influence.

The presence of the *kriyasakti* order in the Gandikota and Gutti kingdoms during the Vijayanagara period was a new development. The *Matha* of the *kriyasaktis* was located at Hampi during the Vijayanagara period and its senior priests acted as gurus to the Vijayanagara royals, wielding great influence in the propagation of the Saiva faith. Chandrabhushana *kriyasakti*, one such guru of the royal family, was the recipient of the *agrahara* of Konduru village in Mulkinadu, and he reallocated this *agrahara* to his disciple in A. D. 1371.

Bhiskhavrithi *matha* reached as far as Nargunur in Karimnagar to Sri Kalahasti in South. The patronage to the Sri Kalahastisvara temple by the rulers of Vijayanagara especially by Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya and Sadasivaraya was held in high esteem. With the lavish gifts of these benevolent kings, the temple undoubtedly reached its height of glory. The very fact that Achyutaraya chose Sri Kalahasti for celebrating his coronation shows his reverence towards the deity Sri Kalahastisvara.

The presence of Virasaivas at Srisailam is noticed on the *prakara* or compound wall of the Mallikarjuna temple at Srisailam which came into existence during Krishnadevaraya period. The narrative panels portray Basavesvara, Ekanataramaiah, Kinnerah Brahmayya, Madivala Macharya, Akka Mahadevi, etc. The presence of the Virasaivas at Srisailam and in Andhra was a notable dimension in the religious scene of the Vijayanagara period. They also patronised the Pasupatas, Kalamukhas, Sakta, Siddha and Tantric cults. The Bhairava temple at Mopuru in Kadapa district, datable to the late thirteenth century A. D., must have been a nodal point for the Kapalikas during Vijayanagara period.

The above references show how the rulers of Vijayanagara patronised Saivism. This is also reflected on their coinage. In the year 1976, some Vijayanagara gold coins were found in a pot in the Chinnachowk village of Kadapa district¹⁵.

The different types of coins are found in this hoard bearing the gods and goddesses like Uma-Maheswara, Balakrishna, Lakshmi-Narayana and Lord Venkateswara which were issued by Sri Pratapa Harihara, Krishnadevaraya, Sadasivaraya and Sri Rangaraya I.

SIVA PARVATHI TYPE

Siva Parvathi or Uma-Maheswara types of coins are generally represented Lord Siva and Parvathi. These types of coins were issued by Harihara II, Devaraya I, Devaraya II, Krishnadevaraya and Sadasivaraya. Lord Siva first appeared on the coins of Harihara II. Lord Siva as Virupaksha the Lord with the terrible eye was the patron deity of all the Vijayanagara rulers. This type of coins were issued in three metals i.e., gold, silver and copper.

Gold coins

These types of Gold coins were issued by Harihara II, Devaraya I, Krishnadevaraya, and Sadasivaraya.



Harihara II, the Sangama ruler, issued Siva Parvathi type of gold coins with slight variations. On some of the gold coins, on the obverse side Siva is shown seated in *padmasana* on lotus with goddess Parvathi on the left lap. Both of them are wearing *kiritas* and other ornaments. Siva is shown with four arms. One of the left hands he holds the trident while the other hand is around his consort waist, one of the right hands (upper right hand) he holds the *damaru* while the other lower right hand is in the *abhayamudra*, the symbolic of promising prosperity and protection to all. Head of Lord 'Siva's above the

head are the Sun and Moon, probably the symbols of the desire that the empire should last till the Sun and Moon¹⁶ lasted.

A slight variation is found on some other coins of Harihara II. In this case the right hand of the God holds *parasu* on the battle axe in place of *Damaruka*.¹⁷ on a single coin of half Pagoda type issued by Harihara II at Kadapa taluk also figures Siva Parvathi symbol¹⁸.

Devaraya I was the next ruler who issued Siva Parvathi type of gold coins. Three hundred and eight gold coins issued by Devaraya I of Uma-Maheswara type are in the Hyderabad museum. On the obverse of the first type coins the god and goddess are shown seated in *padmasana* posture.¹⁹ Lord Siva is represented with four hands holding *Parasu* and *Damaruka* in two hands, keeping the rest of the hands in *Abhayamudra* and in the embracing posture of the goddess. Both Siva and Parvathi are shown wearing *kiritas*. In the second type Lord Siva and Parvathi are shown with archaic dress and ornaments. Siva is shown holding a *Parasu* in his right hand and a *Mriga* in his left hand.²⁰

Krishnadevaraya of Tuluva dynasty issued Siva Parvati type of coins. His coins also are similar to the coins of the Harihara II, except Lord Siva and goddess Parvati are seated on raised *pedestal*. The goddess Parvati is shown with two hands normally kept in the act of affectionate gesture to Lord Siva. Both the god and goddess are well adorned with *kiritas* and *archaic* dress and ornaments²¹.



Sadasivaraya was the next ruler who issued Siva Parvati type of coins. On the obverse of the coin is shown Lord Siva with his consort Parvati seated on a raised *pedestal*. Both the deities wear *kiritas* and ornaments. Siva holds a *damaru* in his right hand²².

Silver coins

Silver coins were issued by Harihara II and Devaraya I.



Harihara II coin, on the obverse side, shows Siva and Parvati seated. Goddess has folded her hands in *anjali* posture²³. Devaraya I was the next ruler who issued Siva Parvati coins. His coins are similar to those issued by Harihara II.

Copper coins



These types of coins were issued by Devaraya II. On the obverse of the coin is depicted the figures of Siva and Parvati seated on a raised *pedestal*. Parvati has folded her hands in *anjali* posture²⁴.

A careful study of the above coin types of Siva Parvathi enable to draw the following conclusion. The god and goddess are shown in a sitting posture. The goddess Parvati is seated on the left thigh of the Lord Siva. Both are well adorned with *kiritas*. On all the issues the Lord Siva is represented with four hands; *Trisula* and *Damaru* are the attributes shown normally in the hands of the Siva. It is observed that one of the hands is invariably kept in *abhayamudra*, while the other is in an act of embracing the goddess. The goddess is shown with two hands normally kept in the act of adoring her Lord. On the most of the coins the Sun and Moon are represented on either side of the head of the Lord. These coins exhibit considerable artistic skill in the representation of the deities. In modelling, in posture and in anatomic details they are pleasing and charming²⁵.

Section II

Vaishnavism

Vaishnavism is one of the major branches of *Hinduism* along with *Saivism*, *Smartism*, and *Shaktism*. It is focused on the veneration of Vishnu. Vishnu is original and supreme god among the gods and is known by other names called as Narayana and Vasudeva, Krishna. Vaishnavites are the followers of the supreme Lord Vishnu. A large percentage of Hindus are Vaishnavas, with the vast majority living in India. They lead a way of life promoting differentiated monotheism, which gives importance to Lord Vishnu and his ten incarnations.

As there is no single founder, the worship of Vishnu cannot be reliably shown to have begun at any fixed date in the past. Vishnu is the deity worshipped in the *Vedas* and their scriptural adjuncts, according to *Vaishnavas*. He is the supreme Lord, and is the only entity primarily praised in all true scriptures. Vishnu is the Lord, is the cause, the protector, and the destroyer of all creation known and unknown, and is responsible for all bondage and liberation. He is beyond the scope of all that is evanescent and eternal and his worship is the purpose of one's existence. He is free of all flaws, and has an infinite number of good attributes.

It is not definitely known when the *Vaishnava* religion began to be followed by the Vijayanagara royals. According to the *prapannamritam* of Ananthacharya, a celebrated *Vaishnava* work, king Virupaksha was the first Vijayanagara ruler who embraced to Vaishnavism²⁶. Though his predecessors were staunch followers of Saivism they followed a policy of religious tolerance towards Vaishnavism. Consequently a number of *Vaishnava* temples were raised and grants of land, gifts in cash and kind were made by sub-ordinate, officers and private individuals long before Vaishnavism was adopted by the sovereigns.

The *Vaishnavas* of this period belonged to two classes viz., the *Vaishnavas* or the followers of Ramanuja, and the *Madhavas* or the followers of Madhava. Culturally broad-minded Sangama rulers, in spite of their adoption of Saivism, made some grants to *Vaishnava* temples at Tirumala and other places. The donations or grants were made by the

sub-ordinates, chiefs, officers and Vaishnava Acharyas and few by the kings during the Sangama period.

Virupaksha II, the last king of the Sangama dynasty, was converted to *Vaishnavism* by Ettur Narasimhacharya. The ground was set ready for the acceptance of *Vaishnavism* in the Vijayanagara Empire from below, before it came from above.

Then the Empire was ruled by the kings of Saluva family. Saluva Narasimha, gave a great impetus to the expansion of Vaishnavism. Mangideva, the ancestor of Saluva Narasimha played an important role in the restoration of the image of Lord Sri Ranganatha to his original abode in Sri Rangan²⁷. From that time the Saluvas came under the influence of Vaishnavism. Mangideva was a devotee of Lord Venkateswara and he got the *Vimanam* and *Sikharam* of Tirumala temple guilded in 1359²⁸. *Saluvabhyudayam* of Rajanatha Dindima refers to a crown presented by Saluva Narasimha during his visit to Tirumala²⁹. He also installed an image of Sri Lakshmi Narasimhaswamy on the path-way leading to Tirumalai hill³⁰. He also built Ramanujakutams (Free feeding houses for Vaishnavas) and made Kandadai Ramanuja Ayyangar as in-charge of these feeding houses. Ayyangar played an important role in the religious activities of the king at Tirumala and Srirangam. Saluva Narasimha appointed Ayyangar as the treasurer guardian of the gold treasury of the temple at Tirupati³¹.

The founder of the Tuluva dynasty, Narasa Nayaka and his successors were devotees of Vishnu and patronised Vaishnavism. Narasimha, a son of Narasa Nayaka, was a staunch Vaishnavite. He was a disciple of *Srimadvedamarga* Pratishthapanacharya and *abhayaVedanthapravarthaka* Peddacharya of Tatacharya. An inscription from Bukkapatnam refers to Vira Narasimha's gift of that village to his guru in 1508 A.D.³².

Krishnadevaraya, a son of Narasa Nayaka, was an ardent *Vaishnava*. He made rich and numerous grants to *Vaishnava* temples. One of the renowned constructions of Krishnadevaraya in the city of Vijayanagara was the Krishnaswamy temple. After his conquest of Udayagiri fort, he carried away from that place the image of Krishna to his capital and enshrined it in a temple raised for that purpose in 1515 A.D.³³ The triumph of *Vaishnavism* in that city as well as in the Vijayanagara Empire is significant with the

construction of this temple. He also constructed the Hazara Rama temple at Hampi³⁴ and made some addition to the Vitthala Swami temple which is stated to be the most ornate of all religious edifices in the Vijayanagara Empire. Krishnadevaraya installed a monolithic statue of the god *Nrisimha*, hewn out of a single boulder in 1528 A.D. and enshrined it within a walled enclosure in the capital³⁵. Sri Varadaraja temple at Kanchipuram was also improved.

Krishnadevaraya was an ardent worshiper of Lord Venkateswara who was his patron deity. He visited the temple at Tirumala seven times between 1513 A.D., and 1521 A.D., and offered rich gifts. His Queens Tirumaladevi and Chinnadevi also gifted valuable presents and provided daily offerings to the Lord at Tirumala. The royalty, sub-ordinates, officers and *Vaishnava* *Acharyas* lavishly made donations to the temple and it shows the popularity of *Vaishnavism* and Tirumala as the premier *Vaishnava* centre.

Krishnadevaraya also made grants to other *Vaishnava* centres like Ahobala Nrisimhasvami at Ahobalam, Srikakuleswara temple at Srikakulam, and Simhachalam.

Achyutaraya, the successors of Krishnadevaraya, also was an ardent *Vaishnava* and made gifts to Vittala temple at Vijayanagara it was the *Svarnakshara* or earth of gold³⁶. He was a staunch worshiper of Lord Venkateswara and visited the temple twice. He also made gifts to other *Vaishnava* temples at Lepakshi and Melavoy³⁷.

With the advent of the Aravidu dynasty, *Vaishnavism* gained much importance. The emperors like Tirumalaraya were a staunch devotee of Vishnu. His Penanguluru grant dubshim ‘a repository of nectar like devotion to Hari’, which is another name for Vishnu³⁸. He also made a number of grants to *Vaishnva* temples and issued coins bearing *Vaishnava* symbols. Sri Rangaraya, the son of Tirumalaraya, who ruled between 1572-1585 A. D., was also an ardent *Vaishnava* and restored worship in the Ahobalam temple by driving away the Muslim forces³⁹.

Sadasivaraya also was an ardent devotee of Vishnu. He makes clear in one of his grants dated 1558 A. D.⁴⁰ that death to him meant the attainment of a place in *Vaikunta*, the mythical heaven ruled by Vishnu. *Vaishnavism* gained a stronger hold during his reign. He donated 31 villages to the Ramanuja *kutam* at Sri Perumbudur for its maintenance and

to carry on the regular worship of Vishnu⁴¹. Princes preceptors also played an important role in the spread of *Vaishnavism*, to name a few Kandadai Srirangacharya and prince Kondaraja.

Venkatapathiraya II was a staunch devotee of Sri Venkateswara. His copper statue with folded hands and clasped palms in the Tirumala temple stands as a memorial of his devotion⁴². His fervent devotion to Vishnu made him introduce some innovations in the mode of issuing of royal grants. It is reflected in his coins and patronage of temples.

Hitherto the emperors of Vijayanagara from the beginning adopted the practice of inscribing invocations to both Siva and Vishnu at the beginning of their grants and signing them in the end with Sri Virupaksha, the name of the guardian deity of the Aravidu kingdom. Venkatapathiraya II broke this tradition and at the beginning of his grants we find more signs of the *Vaishnava* faith. The above points clearly show how the rulers of Vijayanagara patronised *Vaishnavism*.

Now coming to the coins relating to Vaishnavism or Vishnu, for the first time the iconography Vishnu is noticed on the copper coins of Vishnumithra from Panchala can be dated to 1st century B.C.⁴³ The reverse side of this coin has a standing deity of Vishnu depicted with wheel. Further, a silver drachmas issued by the Indo Greek governor most clearly depicts the iconography of Krishna with his brother Balarama on the obverse and reverse respectively. The style and the dress seen on the Panchala coin is more close to the sculpture found in Mathura which belong to the Kushana period.

During the Vijayanagara rule, the currency system of the region saw a new trend. After the Gupta dynasty, the Rayas of Vijayanagara were the first to issue gold coins in large numbers and denominations, though the gold used was a base quality. They also issued silver and copper coins for business and day-to-day transactions.

The *Vaishnava* symbols on coins and the same as represented in sculpture is discussed in detail.

HANUMAN TYPE

Hanuman is a Hindu deity, who was an ardent devotee of Lord Rama. He is a central character in the Indian epic *Ramayana*. He also finds mention in several other texts, including *Mahabharata*, the various *Puranas* and Jain texts. Hanuman participated in the fight between Sri Rama and the demon king Ravana. Hanuman type of coins were issued by Harihara I, Bukkaraya I, Harihara II, Devaraya I, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I, Venkatapathiraya II, and Venkatapathiraya III. These coins were minted in gold, silver and copper metals.

Gold coins

Hanuman type of coins were issued by Harihara I, Bukkaraya I, and Harihara II.



On the obverse of the coin is shown Hanuman moving to the right with knees bent, the left hand resting on the left knee and the right hand raised up, the tail is lifted up behind the head and the face looking forward. A dagger in the back, Hanuman is clothed. One of the main characteristic features is the fold of clothing that hangs down in a 'V' shape between the legs⁴⁴. Bukkaraya I and Harihara II⁴⁵ coins are similar to these coins. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Hazara Rama at Hampi.

Silver coin

Silver type of coins were issued by Harihara I⁴⁶, Bukkaraya I⁴⁷ and Devaraya I. These types of coins are similar to the gold coins.

Copper coins

Copper coins were issued by Harihara I⁴⁸, Bukkaraya I, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I, Venkatapathiraya II and Venkatapathiraya III.



On the obverse side of coins issued by Harihara I, Hanuman is shown facing to right with uplifted tail and his both the hands half raised, surrounded by a circular line⁴⁹.



On the obverse side of coins issued by Bukkaraya I, Hanuman is shown moving to right. The tail is raised up and curling above the head. The left leg is raised the right hand is raised up⁵⁰. These features are also seen with premises of Hazara Rama temple, at Hampi. Coins issued by Sri Rangaraya I⁵¹ and Venkatapatiraya I⁵² are similar to this type. Coins issued by Venkatapatiraya II have the following distinct features: coin is discussed below.



On the obverse of the coin it is shown that Hanuman is seated in *padmasana* posture on a plain pedestal and the tail is curved near the head. The face is turned to the right. Right hand is in *abhayamudra* posture⁵³. Left hand is raised up. Coins issued by Venkatapathiraya III are found to be similar to these coins except that Hanuman is seated in *sukasana* posture.

It is more probable that Hanuman, one of the most popular deities among the Hindu gods, was chosen by Harihara I with a view to inspire the people with the ideals of determination, diligence, discipline, and dedication to build the Vijayanagara empire. However, the Kadambas were to portray first this deity on their coins. Hanuman depicted

on the coins of Vijayanagara, is a symbol of strength and victory to every Hindu. The figure of Hanuman was also depicted on the coins of Yadavas. The gold coins are called *Hanumantharayi-varahas* as they bear the figure of Hanuman on the obverse side. The god is depicted in his 'Vira' form, resembling a warrior. The depiction on the coins has close artistic links with contemporary sculptural representation of Hanuman.

VISHNU TYPE

Vishnu is a popular Hindu deity. He is the Supreme God of Vaishnavism, one of the three most influential denominations in contemporary Hinduism. Vishnu is also known as Lord Narayana the Supreme God and is also known as Lord Hari. Lord Vishnu is one of the important gods during Vijayanagara period. Vishnu is depicted on both the walls of their temples and their coins. Vishnu type of coins were issued by Harihara I, Krishnadevaraya, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I and Sri Rangaraya III. All these rulers minted the coins in copper metal only.

Harihara I issued Vishnu type of coin.



On the obverse of the coins issued by Harihara I, it is shown that Vishnu as seated, holding conch and discus⁵⁴ in the left and right hands respectively. Coin issued by Krishnadevaraya shows Vishnu seated with four hands. One of the upper right hand has *chakra*, while upper left hand has *sankha*, right lower hand is in *abhayamudra* and left lower hand is in *katihasta*⁵⁵. Coins of Venkatapathiraya I⁵⁶ regime are similar to those of Krishnadevaraya coins. Sri Rangaraya I coins are also similar to the Krishnadevaraya coins, except that Vishnu is depicted in a standing posture. Sri Rangaraya III issued Vishnu type of coins with small variations.



The first type of coin, shows Vishnu in *Kurmavatara*⁵⁷ standing posture.



The second type of coin, bears on the obverse the figure of *MatsyaAvatar*⁵⁸ of Vishnu.

Vishnu type of coins are issued by Sangama, Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties of Vijayanagara Empire. Vishnu is the Supreme God of *Vaishnavism*. The Lord Vishnu is shown either seated or in standing posture. Generally, the Lord Vishnu is represented with four hands; and *sankha* and *chakra* are the attributes shown normally in the hands of Vishnu. It is observed that lower right hand is invariably kept in *abhaya mudra* (gesture of benediction) while the other is in a posture of *katihasta*.

LAKSHMI TYPE

Lakshmi is said to be the goddess of fortune and luck. Goddess Lakshmi attained full iconographic significance in the epics. She occurs on the obverse of the Satavahana coin of Siri Yajna Satakarni. This tradition was continued by the Vijayanagara rulers also. Lakshmi type of coins were issued by Harihara I and Harihara II, Krishnadevaraya and Tirumalaraya I. These coins were minted in gold and copper metals.

Gold coins

Gold type of coins were issued by Harihara II and Krishnadevaraya. Coins issued by Harihara II show goddess Lakshmi⁵⁹ in sitting posture within a circle of dots. Coins of Krishnadevaraya regime depicted goddess Lakshmi⁶⁰ in a sitting posture with four hands within a circle of dots.

Copper coins

Copper coins were issued by Harihara I and Tirumalaraya I. Harihara I coin shows the figure of goddess Lakshmi. Who is seated in *padmasana* holding lotus buds in her two upraised hands⁶¹. Tirumalaraya I coin shows goddess Lakshmi seated in a *sukasana* posture⁶², with a dagger in the right hand.

Evidently, we find the figure of goddess Lakshmi appears on many Vijayanagara coins along with Lord Narayana and Lord Narasimha. But in these coins goddess is shown independently. On all the instances goddess Lakshmi is seen in a sitting posture. According to the *Silparatna*, it describes that the image of Lakshmi, the chief consort of Lord Vishnu, should have only two arms when she is by the side of Lord Vishnu. However, she is depicted separately she should have four arms and be seated upon a lotus.

LAKSHMI NARAYANA TYPE

These coins have the figures of goddess Lakshmi and Lord Vishnu on the obverse of the coins. Such coins, minted in gold and copper metals, were issued by Harihara II, Devaraya I, Ramachandra, Sadasivaraya and Venkatapathiraya II.

Gold coins

Gold coins were issued by Harihara II, Devaraya I, Ramachandra and Sadasivaraya. In the coin issued by Harihara II, the figure printed below,



We find on the obverse of the coin the figures of the Lord Narayana and Goddess Lakshmi seated in *Padmasana* posture. The god has four hands. The god carries *chakra* and *sankha* in the upper hands and the lower left passes round the back of goddess Lakshmi, and the lower right in *abhaya mudra*, a benedictory symbol assuring protection to all. Both are shown with *kirtas* and ornaments. Goddess Lakshmi is shown with two hands. Benedictory symbol the right hand of the goddess holds a lotus while the other is in

*dolahasta mudra*⁶³. Devaraya I is coins are similar to those of Harihara II, except the sun and the moon above the figures⁶⁴. Coins of Ramachandra and Sadasivaraya are also similar to the coins of Harihara II.

Copper

Copper coins were issued by Venkatapathiraya⁶⁵ II only and these coins are also similar to the gold coins issued by Harihara II.

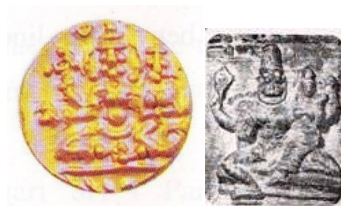
A study of coins with the figures of Lakshmi–Narayana reveals that generally goddess Lakshmi and Lord Vishnu are shown seated besides. The coins give an insight into the head-dress and ornaments worn on ceremonial occasions. The head dress consisted of *kiritas*. Lord Vishnu is depicted with two or four hands in which he holds the *sankha* and *chakra* in the left and right respectively. Lower left hand is thrown around the waist of the goddess, whereas, the lower right hand is invariably in *abhaya mudra* posture. The goddess Lakshmi is shown holding a lotus in the right hand and the left is in *dolahasta mudra*.

LAKSHMI NARASIMHA TYPE

The Narasimha *avatara* is one of the prominent incarnations of the Lord Vishnu. For the first time this deity was depicted on the coins of Hoyasala king Narasimha II. Subsequently, this god appears on the gold coins of Harihara II depicting Lakshmi and Narasimha seated on a high pedestal. Lord Narasimha is shown either single or with his consort Lakshmi. These type of coins were issued by Harihara II, Vira Narasimha, Sadasivaraya, Ramadevaraya and Sri Rangaraya III. Such coins were minted in gold and copper metals.

Gold coins

This type of coin was issued by Harihara II.



On the obverse of the coin is shown Lord Narasimha⁶⁶ seated on a high pedestal in the *padmasana* posture with his consort goddess Lakshmi seated on his left thigh. Lord Narasimha holds *sudarshanachakra* in the upper right arm, *sankha* in the upper left, keeps the lower right in *abhaya mudra* and passes the lower left round the back of goddess Lakshmi. The god is adorned with *kirita*. The same features are also reflected on the walls of the sculpture Tirumala temple.

Copper coins

These types of coins were issued by Vira Narasimha, Sadasivaraya, Ramadevaraya and Sri Rangaraya III.



Coins issued by Vira Narasimha show Lord Narasimha⁶⁷ as seated in squatting posture. Sadasivaraya⁶⁸ and Ramadevaraya⁶⁹ coins are similar to the coins of Vira Narasimha. Sri Rangaraya's III coin is shown below.



We find on the obverse of the coin Vira Narasimha⁷⁰ seated on a raised platform with his consort goddess Lakshmi seated on his left lap. God is holding *chakra* in the right, *sankha* in the left hands.

BRAHMA SARASWATI TYPE

The Hindu mythology assigns the role of Creator to Brahma. He is the first member of the orthodox *Brahmanical* trinity, and the *Puranas* give different accounts regarding his origin. In one place it is described as having been born of the Supreme (*Hiranya garbha*) Being. When the later united with energy, Maya, elsewhere it is said, he emanated out of a

golden egg that lay floating on primeval waters. But the most widely accepted version is that he was born out of a lotus that sprung up from the navel of Lord Vishnu.

According to Shri Madha Bhagawata Mahapurana, Brahma emerged from Vishnu's navel, Vishnu being is the main source of whatsoever exist in the world; what is created is part of his own body. According to the *Puranas*, Brahma is self-born in the lotus flower. Another legend says that Brahma was born in water, or from a seed that later became the golden egg, *Hiranyagarbha*. From this golden egg, Brahma, the Creator was born. The remaining materials of this golden egg expanded into the *Brahmanda* or Universe. Being born from a lotus, Brahma is also called as *Kanjaja* (born from a lotus). There is a story for Sharsa Brahma. Hence the concept of multiple universes as every Brahma creates his *Bhramanda* (universe) for one Brahma year. Brahma's wife is Saraswati. Saraswati is also known by names such as Savitri and Gayatri, and has taken different forms throughout history. Brahma is often identified with Prajapati, a Vedic deity. Being the husband of Saraswati or Vaac Devi (the Goddess of Speech), Brahma is also known as "*Vaagish*," meaning "Lord of Speech and Sound." Brahma and Saraswati were depicted on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers. These types of coins were issued by Harihara II and were minted in gold only.



On the obverse of the coin is shown the figures of Lord Brahma and his consort Saraswati as seated in *padmasana* posture. Brahma has four hands and one of the hands is in *abhaya mudra* and the other hand holds a ladle, and *kalasa*. Saraswati holds a *vina*⁷¹ and *pustaka* in her hands.

This is a very unique coin containing the two deities Lord Brahma and Saraswathi. Both the god and goddess are seated in *padmasana* posture.

SARASWATI TYPE

Saraswati, the goddess of learning and fine arts, occupies a place of paramount importance in terms of her popularity and wide appeal amongst the gods and the goddesses of brahmanical pantheon. She is variously known as Vach, Vagdevi, Vagisvari, Vani, Sarada, Bharathi and Vinapani. Literally, Saraswati means “the flowing one. In the *Rigveda* she represents a river and the deity presiding over it. Hence, she is connected with fertility and purification, a river goddess of importance in the *Rigveda* period, the concept of Saraswati has undergone considerable changes in the later times. She is now considered to be the goddess of wisdom and science and the mother of the *Vedas*, the sacred book of the Aryans. She is reflected on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers. This type of coin was issued by Krishnadevaraya. This is a gold coin. On the obverse of the coin goddess Saraswati with crown is shown and her attributes are not clear. Goddess holds an indistinct object in her raised hand. Behind her a peacock is depicted⁷².

LORD VENKATESWARA TYPE

The god Vishnu is one of the most popular deities of the Hindu trinity. The mode of representing the various forms of Vishnu found expression in the various *Agamasastras*, of which the most outstanding are the *Vaikhyanasagama*, the *Pancharatragama*, the *Tantrasara* of Madvacharya and the *VishnuDharmottara*. Lord Venkateswara is represented on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers.

Krishnadevaraya was the great ruler among the Vijayanagara rulers. After the conquest of Orissa, he visited Tirupati temple and performed the *Kanakabhisheka* to Lord Venkateswara and for this purpose⁷³, he minted gold coins with portrait of this God on the obverse. That these were not just ordinary coins is proved by the fact that their weight was more than the double of the ordinary standard gold coins. The Venkateswara type of coins of Krishnadevaraya weighs 120 grains against the ordinary *gadyanas* of 52 grains. That this is not an isolated event is attested to by the fact that other kings Ramaraya, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I, Venkatapathiraya II, Venkatapathiraya III and Sri Rangaraya III continued this tradition of the Venkateswara type of coins. These types of coins were minted in gold and copper metals.

Gold coins

These types of coins were issued by Krishnadevaraya, Ramaraya, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I, Venkatapathiraya II, Venkatapathiraya III, and Sri Rangaraya III.

Coins of Krishnadevaraya period are shown below.



On the obverse side of the coin is shown Lord Venkateswara standing to front with a tall *kirita* and upper and lower cloth and ornaments. The right back hand holds the *Chakra* and the left the *Sankha*. The right front hand is in the *danamudra*⁷⁴ and the left rests on his hip and points to his feet as the place of refuge for all devotees. Above the image of the Lord is an ornamental *torana* or arch with a lion is face at the keystone supported by two *Makaras*. The arch is born by two ornamental star-shaped pillars, the lower parts of which are covered by planks. The God stands on a ground which is supported by a lotus⁷⁵. Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya I, Aliya Ramaraya, Venkatapathiraya II, and Sri Rangaraya III also followed this tradition with small variations only. Sri Rangaraya I is coin presented in a figure below.



On the obverse of the coin, Lord Venkateswara is shown standing to the front under an ornamental arch supported by ornamental pillars. This coin is similar to the coins issued by Krishnadevaraya. The Lord Venkateswara is shown standing in *Sampada stanaka* posture⁷⁶ under an ornamental arch with ornamental pillars. Venkatapathiraya III was the next ruler who issued the Lord Venkateswara coins.



On the obverse of the coin is shown Lord Venkateswara standing facing, with his consorts Sridevi and Bhudevi⁷⁷ on right and left sides respectively. Sri Rangaraya III coins bear the figure of Lord Venkateswara under an arch⁷⁸ as on the coins of Venkatapatiraya I.

Copper coins

These types of coins were issued by Aliya Ramaraya, and Venkatapathiraya II. Ramaraya coin is shown in a circle of dots, Lord Venkateswara⁷⁹ standing facing front. Venkatapathiraya II issued Venkateswara type of coin.



On the obverse of the coin Lord Venkateswara is shown standing to the front, surrounded by dotted circular lines. To the right of the god, a lamp-stand and to the left a flag- post are noticed. The Lord is holding *chakra* and *sankha*⁸⁰ in the right and left hands respectively.

A study of the Venkateswara coins issued by the Aravidu kings reveals that they were staunch *Vaishnavites*. Invariably, on all the coins the figure of Lord Venkateswara is found in a similar posture as standing to the front. The only variations are plain arch, supported by pillars of dots, ornamental arch and pillars. The figures on all the coins are artistically depicted.

BALAKRISHNA TYPE

Balakrishna type of coins were issued by Krishnadevaraya, Sri Rangaraya I and Venkatapatiraya II. These coins are minted in gold and copper. Making public his favouritism to Vaishnavism, Krishnadevaraya introduced new coins containing the images of *Vaishnava* deities. Soon after Krishnadevaraya brought the image of Krishna from Udayagiri, after its conquest, he minted coins containing the image of divine baby Balakrishna with a conch to his right and discus to the left on the obverse⁸¹.

Gold coins

Gold type of coins were issued by Krishnadevaraya.



The figure of Lord Balakrishna is depicted on the obverse of the coin. The Lord Balakrishna is shown in a sitting posture, with the left knee completely bent and slightly raised to facilitate his hand to rest over it; his right leg is also completely bent and placed touching the left leg to enable the deity to sit at ease. The Lord is shown holding a lump of butter in his right hand, whereas, the left hand is shown resting on the left knee. To the left of Lord Balakrishna is *sankha* and to the right is *chakra*. The Lord wears various ornaments like ear-rings, a girdle of gingles, armlets, bracelets and anklets.

Another coin shows the Lord Balakrishna in the sitting posture with the right knee bent and resting on the seat, while the left leg is raised up and supporting the arm. The circles of dots are shown around the Lord's head with *sankha* and *chakra* on the left and right respectively. The lord is shown wearing all the usual ornaments. The Lord right hand holds a ball of butter⁸². On another type of coin, the posture of Lord Balakrishna and ornaments are same. The only difference is that the Lord's head is decorated with a crown of peacock feathers. On some other specimens, the Lord is shown in a tight fitting dress.

On another type of coin, the Lord is shown with additional ornaments like shoulder ornaments, necklace and sacred thread. The hair is shown with curls around the head with a *crupa* on it. The Lord has *sankha* and *chakra*. On other coins, the Lord is shown in sitting posture with the right knee completely bent and resting on the seat. The left leg which is bent is shown kept below the right leg. While the right hand holds a butter ball, the left hand rests on the left knee. The Lord is shown with various ornaments like, ear- rings, girdle of rattles, bracelets, armlets. A circle of dots is shown around the head with *sankha* to the right and *chakra* to the left. The Lord Balakrishna motifs on the coins of Krishnadevaraya reflected his love for the Lord Krishna *avatars* and is regarded as one of

the most comprehensive incarnations ever assumed by the Lord Vishnu. The iconographical features of Lord Krishna are well portrayed on the coins. They are outstanding as pieces of art.

Copper coins

Balakrishna type of copper coins were issued by Krishnadevaraya, Sri Rangaraya I and Venkatapathiraya II. Coin issued by Krishnadevaraya is shown below.



On the obverse of the coin is shown Balakrishna⁸³ is seated on a raised up seat one leg is hanging down at ease. Sri Rangaraya I and Venkatapathiraya II issued dancing Krishna type of coins. On the obverse of the coin dancing Krishna⁸⁴ is shown. He holds *chakra* in the right hand, *sankha* in the left hand.

Numerous varieties of the representation of child Krishna (Balakrishna) are noticeable on the coins of Krishnadevaraya, ornamented child Krishna, squatting in different postures, holds a lump of fresh butter⁸⁵ (*navanita*)) on his right palm. All the figures are fleshy. Several of them, in different types of half-squatting posture, indicate a lithe movement. However, artistic qualities of the representations are not the same on all relevant coins. A wheel and conch are noticeable in the upper field of these coins. The appearance of these two cognizances of Vishnu identifies the figure as representing not only the child Krishna but also Lord Krishna, identifiable with Vishnu.

SRI RAMA-SITA- LAKSHMANA TYPE

Sri Rama is one of the ten *avatars* of Lord Vishnu and this *avatara* has come to be looked upon as a human incarnation of Vishnu. The image of Sri Rama, according to silpa texts, should not have more than two hands. He should carry in the right hand *bana* or arrow and in the left hand *dhanus* or the bow. Sri Rama-Sita-Lakshmana figures are represented on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers.

The reign of Tirumalaraya I synchronized with the revival of worshipping Sri Rama in South India⁸⁶. Tirumalaraya *varahas* bear on the obverse a group which evidently stands for the coronation of Sri Rama with Sita and Lakshmana. These coins give an insight of the revival of Rama worship⁸⁷. In the sphere of Vaishnavite worship, Lord Rama played a vital role in Vijayanagara sculpture. An entire temple, namely, the Hazara Rama temple was dedicated wholly to Lord Rama where profusion of sculptures depicting scenes from Ramayana is found.

Tirumalaraya I changed the deity on his coins, and also he changed the capital to Penukonda after the death of Sadasivaraya. He changed his protecting deity from Virupaksha to Sri Rama; it is evidenced by his coins. His coins contain on the obverse Sri Rama with Sita and Lakshmana. Tirumalaraya I was the originator of the Ramatanki coins which were most popular in South India in Post-Vijayanagara period. Tirumalaraya I issued Lord Rama-Sita and Lakshmana type of gold coins.



On the obverse of the coin is depicted Lord Rama seated on a throne with Goddess Sita on his left thigh with standing Lakshmana behind Rama in an attitude of devotion and he has a bow in his right shoulder. Lord Rama is represented with a tall *kirita* with his right hand in *abhaya mudra*⁸⁸ symbolizing his hand of benediction and protection.

Tirumalaraya's *varahas* bear, on the obverse, a group which evidently stands for the coronation of Sri Ram-Sita and Lakshmana. After the death of Sadasivaraya's in 1570, Tirumalaraya found it necessary, for military reasons, to make Penukonda his capital. He thus transferred himself and his Empire from the protection of god Virupaksha of Vijayanagara to the care of Lord Ramachandra. Tirumalaraya still invoked on his inscriptions Ganapati, Siva and Vishnu, and had always the old imperial colophon 'Sri Virupaksha' in Kannada. Yet owing to the resistance offered by Penukonda to the Moslems combined with the influence of the *Sri Vaishnava* teachers and possibly the

choice of Rama as the special deity to the emperor, he introduced Rama on the coins. It is likely that the tradition about the *Rama-Tankas* said to have been minted at the coronation of Rama, may have led to the issue of a large number of new *Rama-Tankas* on and subsequent to the coronation of his devotee Tirumalaraya. As the reign of Tirumala synchronises with the revival of the worship of Rama in South India under the leadership of the Tatacharya's, it is reasonable to hold that some of the *Rama-tankas*⁸⁹ of which are worshipped in South India were produced in the days of Tirumala and his successors. But a large number of them, especially those of silver, and alloys, are imitations produced not only in the south but also in the north as is borne out by the Hindi couplet on some of them.

VAISHNAVAITE SYMBOLS

SANKHA AND CHAKRA TYPE

Vishnu possess several *ayudhas*, but the most important ones are *sankha* and *chakra*. *Chakra* is known as *Sudarsana chakra*. The *sanka* and *chakra* are distinctive *Vaishnava* symbols. These types of coins, issued by Tirumalaraya I, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapatiraya II and Ramadevaraya, were minted in copper only. Tirumalaraya's I coin is shown below.



On the obverse of the coin is shown, within a ring of dots, a large *Sankha* to the left and *chakra* to the right, with crescent moon above and sun⁹⁰ below. Venkatapathiraya II⁹¹ was the next ruler who issued *sankha* and *chakra* type coins. His coins are similar to the coins of Tirumalaraya I, except lotus-shaped wheel surrounded by a circular line. Ramadevaraya issued *sankha* and *chakra* coins.



On the obverse of the coin is shown *Sudharsana chakra*⁹² surrounded by a dotted circle.

The *sanka* and *Chakra* are distinctive Vaishnavite symbols and stand respectively for Vishnu's terrible discus or chakra named *Sudarsana*, with flames darting forth from it; and his conch, the *sankhaPanchajanya*, which he took as a trophy from the demon *panchajanya* and with which he blew his triumphant blast in the hours of battle and of victory. These two emblems passed from the Karnataka Empire to the kingdom of Madura where they appear on the coins of some of the Nayakas. The later kingdom, the chakra appeared so commonly on the coins that a class of them became known as '*Chakrams*' which are still the most popular copper pieces circulating in that state.



Sri Rangaraya I was the next ruler who issued Vaishnavite parabola symbol. On the obverse of the coin shown parabola Vaishnavite symbol⁹³ is noticed. Another coin on the obverse is a *Vaishnaviteparabola* symbol, surrounded by circular lines.

BOW AND ARROW TYPE

Sri Rama *avatara* was the one of the important incarnations of Vishnu. In this *avatara*, god is in human form and his attributes are bow and arrow. This type of coins were issued by Venkatapathiraya II of the Aravidu dynasty. Coin were minted only in copper metal,



On the obverse of the coin is shown a bow and arrow⁹⁴.

DAGGER TYPE

Tirumalaraya I of the Aravidu dynasty issued dagger type of coins in copper only.



On the obverse of the coin is shown, within a linear circle surrounded by circle of dots, a dagger in the centre with *chakra* to left and *sankha* to right⁹⁵. Another type of coins is shown, within a linear, circle surrounded by circle of dots with a dagger in the centre with a garland⁹⁶ around it.

SAIVATE SYMBOL

DAMARUGA TYPE

Damaruga is the musical instrument of the Lord Siva.



This type of coins were issued by Venkatapathiraya II of the Aravidu dynasty and were minted in copper metal. On the obverse of the coin is shown a *damaruga*⁹⁷ (Siva's musical instrument), surrounded by a circular line.

ANIMAL MOTIFS

Various animals, ingrained independently, are found on Vijayanagara coins, e.g., tiger, elephant, camel and horse⁹⁸.

TIGER TYPE

This type of coin was issued only by king Harihara I who belonged to Sangama dynasty. It was the influence of the Hoyasalas. The figure of a tiger is found on all the copper plates and coins issued by the Hoyasalas in south India. On the obverse of the coin,

we find a figure of standing tiger with its face turned towards left and foreleg raised; the tail is shown bent upwards; a crescent moon is also seen at the top of the tiger⁹⁹. The coins of Harihara I with Hanuman and Garuda are known. But this rare coin with the figure of a tiger and the name of the king in Kannada script is generally considered as the first copper coin issued by Harihara I during the early period of his reign. The link between Hoyasala and Vijayanagara coinage, particularly during the periods of Harihara and Bukkaraya, is provided by the coins illustrated¹⁰⁰.

LION TYPE

Lion can be seen in Vijayanagara art, exactly similar to its prototype of the Vishnukundins, Pallavas and Kadambas. It stands with its right forepaw raised, neck erect, and wide-opened mouth as an ornamental motif. Its tail is curled into a loop as in the case of the lion of the Ramatirtha plates of the Vishnukundins. It is possible that the Vijayanagara emperors carved it on their temples to commemorate the reduction of Kadamba monarch whose name is not mentioned by Marappa. This motif is also depicted on the Vijayanagara coins. These types of coins, issued by Harihara I, Devaraya II and Sadasivaraya, were minted in silver and copper metals.

Silver coins

This type of coins were issued by Devaraya II of the Sangama dynasty. On the obverse of the coin is shown a lion moving to left, with its tail curled on its back and forepaw raised, with sword placed horizontally above it. The entire motif is enclosed in two concentric circles¹⁰¹.

Copper

Lion type of copper coins issued Harihara I and Sadasivaraya. Harihara I coin on the obverse is shown lion moving to left, crescent moon and sun¹⁰² above. Sadasivaraya coin is shown lion passant¹⁰³, to the left.

FISH TYPE

These types of coins were issued by Harihara II and Venkatapathiraya II. These coins were minted in gold and copper.

Gold coins



Harihara II coin on the obverse of the coin is shown two conventionalized fish under conventionalized, canopy. Conch at left side, elephant goad at right side of the fish¹⁰⁴.

Copper coins



Fish type of copper coin is issued by Venkatapathiraya II of the Aravidu dynasty. On the obverse of the coin is a fish¹⁰⁵ moving to right, surrounded by a dotted circular line.

ELEPHANT TYPE

A gold coin of Devaraya II found in the *Srivari hundi* (box of offerings) of Tirumala. This coin has, on the obverse, a moving elephant which is caparisoned and ornamented. The reverse has the Nagari legend *Pratapa Devaraya*. It is difficult to differentiate between the coins of Devaraya I and Devaraya II. Devaraya II had a special fascination for elephants. The credit for introducing the elephant type of coins goes to Devaraya II. “This elephant device appears to have been taken from Ganga Gajapati¹⁰⁶. The title *Gajabentekara* is well known. He was interested in elephant hunt as evidenced by phrases like ‘pleased to institute elephant hunt’ etc., in his inscriptions. Many coins show symbols like a wild elephant in a threatening attitude, or a man fighting with the elephant.

Elephant type of coins were issued by Devaraya II, Mallikarjuna, Vijayaraya II, Vira Narasimha, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya and Tirumalaraya I. These coins are minted in gold, silver and copper metals.

Gold Coins

Gold type of coins were issued by Devaraya II and Vira Narasimha.



On the obverse of the coin is shown in a linear circle an ornamented Elephant¹⁰⁷ moving to left, with an uplifted tail. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Hazara Rama at Hampi. Vira Narasimha coins are similar to these coins except the figures sun and moon above the field of elephant. The same features are also seen from the temple of Hazara Rama in Hampi.

Silver coins

Elephant types of Silver coins are issued by Devaraya II, Mallikarjuna and Tirumalaraya I.



Devaraya II coin shows an elephant¹⁰⁸ moving left. Mallikarjuna coins are similar to the coins of Devaraya II. Tirumalaraya I coins are similar to the gold coins of Vira Narasimha.

Copper coins

Elephant type of coppercoins were issued by Devaraya II, Mallikarjuna, Vijayaraya II, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya and Tirumalaraya I.



On the obverse of the coin, we see in a linear circle surrounded by circle of dots, an elephant carrying a royal sword with sun, moon and Kannada letter “De” above the Elephant.

Mallikarjuna was the next ruler who issued elephant type of coins.



On the obverse of the coin, it is seen in a linear circle, surrounded by circle of dots, an elephant moving to left with uplifted tail, and Kannada single letter *Sri* above is noticed¹⁰⁹. Vijayaraya II was the next ruler who issued this type of coins. The *Sankha* and *Chakra* are above the elephant. Krishnadevaraya coins are similar to the coins Mallikarjuna except there is no letter. Achyutaraya was the next ruler who issued elephant type of coins. On the obverse of the coin is an elephant moving to left with dagger is above the elephant¹¹⁰. Sadasivaraya coins are similar to the coins of Krishnadevaraya coins. Tirumalaraya I coins are similar to the coins of Achyutaraya, except there is a dagger in front.

The elephant symbol may have been adopted by the Vijayanagara rulers for it is symbolic of majesty. In the Hindu myths the elephant is the vehicle of Indra known as *Airavata*, which is declared supreme among elephants by Lord Krishna in the

Bhagavadgita. To the Buddhists, the elephant is symbolic of representing Buddha. To the Jains the elephant is held sacred for it is the *Lanchana* of the Tirtankara Ajitanatha¹¹¹.

HORSE TYPE

In the *Rigveda* three verses are intended to be recited at *asvamedha* sacrifice. This sacrifice came to be considered in the *Puranas* as one of the highest orders though no such merit is ascribed to it in the Vedas. It was, therefore, not inexplicable that this animal continued to Vijayanagara days to be honoured as it was employed not only as an ornament or decoration but was held in genuine reverence. During the *Mahanavami* festival celebrations, in front of the many state horses during the review, went “a horse with two state umbrellas of the king and with grander decorations than the others and one of the lesser equerries led it by the bridle”. These symbols are also reflected on the coins of Vijayanagara. These types of coins were issued by Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya, and Sri Rangaraya III and were minted in gold and copper metals.

Gold coins



Gold type of coin was issued by Achyutaraya. On the obverse of the coin is depicted prancing horse¹¹², to the left. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Hazara Rama Temple at Hampi.

Copper

Copper coins of horse type were issued by Sadasivaraya and Sri Rangaraya III. Sadasivaraya coin represented a fully galloping caparisoned horse, with uplifted tail, to left. In between the hind and forelegs can be seen, hanging tassels of the decorative upholstery¹¹². Sri Rangaraya III coin shows a man seated on horse¹¹⁴.

VARAHA TYPE

The boar is *Adi Varaha*, the third incarnation of Lord Vishnu. It was the famous crest of the Chalukyas. It is interesting to find Tirumala Raya reviving the old Chalukyan boar¹¹⁵. The Boar is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The coins with the figure of *Varaha* (Boar) type were issued by Achyutaraya, Tirumalaraya I, Sri Rangaraya I and Sri Rangaraya III. Varaha type of coins are minted in copper only. On Achyutaraya coin the figure of a Boar moving to right and sun and moon above the figure are depicted. A fascinate of Tirumalaraya I coin is presented below.



On the obverse of the coin is shown a *varaha* or a boar¹¹⁶ moving to right with lifted tail and bristle on back standing to end, within a linear circle surrounded by a ring of dots. The boar wears girdle ornaments, and there is a dagger and sun above. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Hazara Rama at Hampi, except the *varaha* facing to right. In Sri Rangaraya I coin the *varaha* is shown moving to right facing a *khadga* with the sun and the moon¹¹⁷ above. Sri Rangaraya III also issued these types of coins.



On the obverse of the coin we see a boar facing to left, in a clearing attitude with bristles of hair on the back¹¹⁸.

Varaha was the *Raja-lanchana* (State Emblem) of the Vijayanagara kingdom. The emblem was the picture of a *varaha* facing a sword. The term *varahas*, along with *gadyana*, was still used in inscriptions of the Vijayanagara period to describe the coin as *pagodas*¹¹⁹.

PEACOCK TYPE

Peacock type of coins were issued by Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya II and Sri Rangaraya III, and were minted in copper only. On the coins of Sri Rangaraya I a man (king?) is shown seated on the peacock. Peacock is facing to right¹²⁰.



In Venkatapathiraya II coin, a peacock¹²¹ is shown facing to right, surrounded by a dotted circular line. Sri Rangaraya III also issued peacock type of coins. On the obverse of the coin, three peacocks¹²² to right are shown.

CAMEL TYPE

Camel type of coins were issued by Sri Rangaraya III of the Aravidu dynasty and were minted in copper metal.



On the obverse of the coin we see a Camel facing to left with right leg raised¹²³, within a dotted circle is seen. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Hazara Rama at Hampi.

VAHANAS

According to literature, every deity is associated with some animals to represent its *vahana* (mount). The deity even when found seated, standing reclining, has been depicted with an animal or human (*nara*) which serves as its *vahana*. There are various animals associated with each deity which is also an identifying mark or symbol for the particular icon. The *Vahanas* are, thus, the symbol of power and movement¹²⁴.

BULL TYPE

Bull is the guardian of the East and a symbol of royalty right from the earliest Indus cultures. Depicting Bull on the coins was quite popular with the kings of Vijayanagara. The bull is also a much venerated animal and treated as holy. The Saivite temples frequently depict the figures of bull. The bull is known as Nandi *vahana* of Lord Siva, who is shown, carved along with the bull in the form of *Vrishabarudhamurthi*. The bull type of coins generally contained a circle of dots within which is found a bull either to left or right with bells hanging from its neck; crescent moon above and a dagger in front are portrayed. The Vijayanagara kings, who belonged to Sangama, Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties, issued a large number of bull type coins in silver and copper metals, except Mallikarjuna all Vijayanagara rulers issued coins in copper.

Silver



Bull type of Silver coin was issued by Mallikarjuna. On the obverse of the coin is shown, in a linear circle, a fine humped bull¹²⁵ moving to left, with Sun and Moon above.

Copper

Bull type of copper coins were issued by Harihara I, Bukkaraya I, Harihara II, Bukkaraya II, Devaraya I, Ramachandra, Vijayaraya I, Krishnadevaraya, Sadasivaraya, Aliya Ramaraya, Tirumalaraya I, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya II, Sri Rangaraya II and Sri Rangaraya III.



Harihara I bull type of coins were issued with small variations. In the first type, on the obverse of the coin is shown a fine humped bull¹²⁶ facing to right, stylised *conch* in front of the bull, and above the bull Kannada single letter 'Ha' is noticed. In the second type of coin, on the obverse is shown highly ornamented bull facing to left, Sun and Moon above, and a lamp-stand in front of the bull¹²⁷. Coins issued by Bukkaraya I¹²⁸ resemble to second type of coins issued by Harihara I.



On the Harihara II coin, is shown within a circle of dots the figure of the fine humped bull is shown moving to left with bells hanging from its neck, crescent moon above and the dagger in front¹²⁹. Bukkaraya II coins are similar to those of Harihara II. He continued the tradition of Harihara II in having bull on his coins. Devaraya I issued bull type of coins with small variations.

In the first type, on the obverse of the coin a fine humped bull is depicted moving to the left with crescent Moon and Sun above in it a circle of dots with no dagger. Some specimens have the Nagari letter 'De' in-front of the bull. Perhaps, it represents the name of the king Devaraya I¹³⁰. The second type of coin is similar to the coins of Harihara II¹³¹.

Ramachandra and Vijayaraya coins are similar to the coins of Harihara's second type, except bull moving to left¹³².



Krishnadevaraya coins are more similar to the Devaraya's bull type of coins. On the obverse of the coin, in a circle of dots a fine bull is depicted standing to the left with

ornamental covering cloth on its back, secured by a girdle. On its neck there are folds of fat and gingle on the throat. The Sun and the Moon are shown above the bull¹³³. Sadasivaraya coins are similar to the coins of Vijayaraya I, except the bull moving to left and there is no sun and moon, and dagger¹³⁴. Aliya Ramaraya coin shows a seated bull under an arch¹³⁵. Tirumalaraya I coins are similar to the coins of Vijayaraya I, except the bull is shown within two borders of dotted circle surrounded by linear circle¹³⁶. Sri Rangaraya II coins are similar to the coins of Tirumalaraya I, except there is no dagger, sun and moon¹³⁷. Venkatapathiraya II also issued bull type of coins.



On the obverse of the coin is shown, within a linear double circular lines a bull moving to left with uplifted tail¹³⁸. Sri Rangaraya II coins are similar to the coins of Tirumalaraya I. Sri Rangaraya III issued similar type of coins.

The presence of a bull on Vijayanagara coins shows the prevalence of Saivism. The Saivites attach great importance to this emblem for it is the *vahana*, vehicle of Lord Siva. *Vrishabha* symbolized the very essence of energy and represents the Great god Siva¹³⁹. The crescent moon stands for Siva, as *Chandrasekhara*, who wears crescent in his *jatamakuta*¹⁴⁰. The Sun and the Moon are sometimes reproduced as symbols of eternal duration and the success of the empire. The above study shows that the Sangama dynasty rulers were mostly followers of *Saivism*. Whereas, the Tuluva and Aravidu dynasties were staunch followers of *Vaishnavism* but they also patronized *Saivism*. This study shows the religious tolerance of the Vijayanagara rulers.

GARUDA TYPE

The word '*Garuda*' has been derived from the root *gri* which means, "To Swallow". There is a popular belief that the Garuda possesses a mystic power against the fatal poison of the serpent. At Puri, persons suffering from snake-bite are taken to the main

hall of the temple, where they embrace a Garuda pillar. Garuda is represented generally, with wings, human arms, vulture legs, and a curved beak-like nose¹⁴¹.

Garuda is the vehicle of Lord Vishnu¹⁴² and is very frequently introduced into the picture of the *Vaishnavas* carrying the deity with or without Lakshmi. He is often depicted as half-bird and half-man¹⁴³. He is generally placed opposite to the shrines of the main deities or at the corners of the parapet walls of Vishnu temples¹⁴⁴. Presence of Garuda symbol on Krishnadevaraya coins reflects the predominance of *Vaishnavism*¹⁴⁵. Hanuman was the first feature of the Vijayanagara Empire. Later issues of the capital feature Garuda in much the same post. This is particularly noticeable on coins dating from the time of Krishnadevaraya, who replaced the small silver *taras* with large copper issues depicting Garuda. The choice of Garuda could have been made because he was also associated with unstinting bravery and service to God as the vehicle of Vishnu. However, he had also become a symbol of the empire for the area. Having first been used by the Guptas, this image then became linked to the dominant polity of the Western Deccan, being appropriated by the Rastrakutas and then the Kalachuris of Kalyani. The use of Garuda on the coins of the Vijayanagara heartlands signalled that they were, indeed, the masters of this region. This image became very popular in the South, appearing on many coins of the successor states. Later, Garuda coins showed him in *anjali mudra*, signifying respect for his Lord Vishnu, or perhaps for the issuer of the coin as representative of this god on earth¹⁴⁶. In Sri Krishnadevaraya gold coins, Lord Krishna took the place of Uma-Maheswara. On the copper coin issues Siva's mount, the bull, gave place to Vishnu's mount Garuda. This change is only indicative of the personal devotion of the emperor, for there is clear evidence in epigraphy to show that the state continued to patronize the worship of other deities also. As declared adherent of the Sri *Vaishnava* faith and under the influence of his advisers of that sect, the emperor, perhaps, found it necessary to substitute Vishnu for Uma-Maheswara, the patron deity of the empire in its earlier days.

Garuda has been a popular deity on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers in particular. The Garuda figure was first portrayed by Harihara I, Harihara II, Devaraya I, Sri Krishnadevaraya, Sadasivaraya, Tirumalaraya I, Ramaraya Venkatadri, Sri Rangaraya I and Venkatapatiraya II.

Gold coins

These types of coins were issued by Bukkaraya I, Harihara II and Venkatapathiraya II. Bukkaraya I coin shows the rude kneeling figure of Garuda facing to the right¹⁴⁷. Harihara II coins are similar to the coins of Bukkaraya I.



Venkatapathiraya II coin shows humanoid Garuda kneeling to left, in a *virasana* posture¹⁴⁸. Hands joined together and placed on the chest in an attitude of devotion with, conch and discus on either side of the head.

Copper coins



These types of coins were issued by Harihara I, Devaraya I and Krishnadevaraya. Harihara I coin shows Garuda moving to right with two hands folded at the chest, in an attitude of devotion¹⁴⁹. Devaraya I coin shows Garuda facing to front in *anjali mudra*. *Sanka* and *chakra* on the either side. There are small variations on the coins issued by Krishnadevaraya.



On the obverse of the coin, is shown the figure of Garuda is depicted to the right, with a big face and a tall *kirita*. His hands are joined in *anjali* posture. The left foot of Garuda is on the ground in the heroic posture or *virasana*. The right knee is shown in the

kneeling posture. Small wings are spread out behind the arms while the fillet and the waist clothes are flying in the air. The whole figure is depicted in a circle of closely linked dots. This coin depicts Garuda¹⁵⁰ in motion.

Second type



On the obverse of the coin is shown in a circle of dots, anthropoid kite or Garuda to left. With beaked face, wearing tall *kirita* with two fillets, hands joined on chest in the attitude of devotion (*anjali* posture). Garuda kneels on his knee with the right foot on the ground in the *virasana*¹⁵¹ or heroic posture. Small wings are spread out behind the arms and the fillets and waist cloth are flying in air. *Sankha* and *chakra* are in the field besides the head. These features are also reflected on the temple walls of Venkataramana temple at Tadipatri.

Achyutaraya was the next ruler who issued garuda type of coins with small variation.

First type



On the obverse of the coin is Garuda seated in *padmasana* posture¹⁵².

Second type



On the obverse of the coin is Garuda kneeling to left, in *virasana* posture. Sadasivaraya coins are similar to Krishnadevaraya second type of coin. Tirumalaraya I of the Aravidu dynasty issued garuda type of coins with small variations.

First type



On the obverse of the coin is shown, within a circle of dots, Garuda kneeling to the left with dagger in front and *sankha* and *chakra* on both sides of his head¹⁵³. The figure is inscribed in a ring of dots.

Second type



On the obverse of the coin is shown, in a linear circle, two Garudas facing each other with a dagger¹⁵⁴ in the centre string of dots under a line in the field below. Ramaraya Venkatadri coin Garuda is shown without *kirita*, its head looks like a tuft of hair at the back. Sri Rangaraya I coins are similar to the Achyutaraya's first type of coins. Venkatapathiraya III issued garuda type of coins with small variations. First type of coin is similar to the coins of Achyutaraya's second type of coins¹⁵⁵.

Second type



On the obverse of the coin is shown seated Garuda, with face turned to left. Left hand is on left lap and right hand is raised¹⁵⁶.

GANDABERUNDA TYPE

The double headed eagle is a very ancient and well known symbol of royalty throughout the world. It might have taken its birth in the Indus valley of the Copper Age or in early Mesopotamia along with the Sphinx and the Gryphon and spread westward to Europe and even central America and south eastward to South India. Numerous Indian dynasties had it as their crest or banner. It appears to have descended through the Chalukyas and the Hoyasalas to the Vijayanagara kings from whom Madura and Ikkeri and, later on, Mysore inherited it. In contemporary India, it is the banner and crest of the kings of Mysore¹⁵⁷.

Marshall traces the origin of the double headed eagle which occurs for the first time in Hittite sculptures in Western Asia. It is also found on an early ivory of the Geometric period from Sparta and that later it was introduced in Taxila by the Scythians. From them it was drafted into the Russian imperial arms and those of Germany. From Taxila it found its way to Vijayanagar and Ceylone¹⁵⁸.

In India the earliest representation of Gandaberunda was first seen at Taxila¹⁵⁹ and later at Sanchi on its bas-reliefs which are ascribed to circa second century B.C.

The Gandaberunda is mentioned as a bird in the *Panchatantra*¹⁶⁰. The term Gandaberunda in no time became an honour of kings, distinguished rivals, feudatories and generals among the Ikshvakus, Chalukyas, Kadambas, Kalachuris and Hoyasalas¹⁶¹.

As successors to the Hoyasalas, the Vijayanagara emperors continued to use this title and like the Varaha formed their royal crest¹⁶². The Gandaberunda or double headed eagle is variously portrayed on Achyutaraya's coin. Gandaberunda type of coins were issued by Achyutaraya and Sadasivaraya of Tuluva dynasty, Sri Rangaraya I of Aravidu dynasty.

Gold coins

Achyutaraya introduced Gandaberunda type of coins in gold. The Gandaberunda or double headed eagle is variously portrayed on his coins. The real significance of the Gandaberunda motif was supremacy and supreme strength of the Vijayanagara Empire.



On the obverse of the coin is shown the back view of Gandaberunda¹⁶³ flying upwards. It is wearing an ornament. The wings and feathers are ornamented and the head has a crest. The huge bird is flying up-wards carrying in each of its two beaks and two claws a fully grown tusker elephant, evidently for feeding upon. The bird wears necklaces and rings on its necks and the elephants trumpet in desperate terror with their uplifted tail and trunk.

Copper coins

Gandaberunda type of copper coins was issued by Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya and Sri Rangaraya I.



Achyutaraya coin shows Gandaberunda flying upwards. The bird is carrying in each one of its two beaks and two claws a full grown elephant¹⁶⁴. On Sadasivaraya coins, Gandaberunda is seen, standing to left¹⁶⁵. Sri Rangaraya I coins are similar to the copper coins of Achyutaraya¹⁶⁶.

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Chapter - III

The tradition of writing inscription on Indian coins can be traced back to 3rd Century B. C., and Greek was probably the script used on Indian coins. Subsequently or around the same time, inscriptions in Brahmi script were also introduced, on the indigenous coins. Later, inscriptions in Brahmi, Kharoshti, and other scripts were commonly used. On ancient Indian coins, however, the inscriptions occupied very little or marginal space, as these coins were, primarily issued with pictorial devices. With the establishment of Delhi Sultanates in the early 13th century, Indian coinage witnessed a fundamental change in the format of coins. Now, inscription became the prime feature of coin and pictorial devices were discarded. The change introduced in the 13th century, continued throughout the medieval Indian currency¹. As these coins contained only the inscription, they provide more information. These help us in knowing many aspects of the history of this period.

The legends on south Indian coins form an important and interesting aspect of the study of the coins. They are important from many points of view and throw light on different aspects of the history. Though there is a variety in the nature of these legends they follow a pattern². Each dynasty had its distinct features in the formation and portrayal of the legends in script, language, contents significance of the name or the title or both.

The first thing that arrests our attention with regard to the legend is the script in which they are found. *Nagari*, *Kannada* and *Telugu* scripts are found on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers. The *Chalukyas* of *Badami* used Kannada script on their coins as evidenced by the gold coins of Vikramaditya II. The same practice was continued by the *Chalukyas* of *Kalyana* as find the titles “*Jagadekamalla*, *Bhulokamalla*” etc written in Kannada. The *Hoyasala* kings Vishnuvardhana and Narasimha continued the same practice though their coinage was greatly influenced by the Cholas. Kakatiyas used Telugu on their coins as evidenced by the titles “*Dayagajakesari* and *Rayagajakesari*” the Kadambas of Goa used both Nagari and Kannada scripts on their coins. In this connection the gold coin of Sivachitta is interesting. The reverse of the coin has the name Sivachitta written five times; three times in Nagari and twice in Kannada.

In the field of literature Sanskrit, Kannada and Telugu flourished alike. Inscriptions were written in all these three languages and scripts in addition to Tamil³.

From the artistic and technical point of view, the Vijayanagara coins show a great improvement. The art of preparing the correct mould and minting the coin is easily seen, particularly in the gold coins. Legends are very clearly seen and the details of the gods and goddesses are also clear. Generally care was taken to mint all the emblems and the legend within the flan. Another interesting feature of the Vijayanagara coins that attracts attention is the variety of legends. These legends are in three scripts, namely Kannada, Nagari and Telugu. It is of interest to note that the very first king Harihara I introduced Kannada and Nagari legends on his coins. Later rulers used Kannada and Nagari on their coins while only at the fag of the dynasty they used Telugu script. To be very precise, three rulers minted coins with Kannada legends; three rulers had Kannada and Nagari; six rulers had only Nagari and two rulers had only Telugu legends⁴.

The legends generally included the name of the issuer or some of his titles. Harihara I and Bukkaraya I used the word '*Vira*' along with their names but from the time of Harihara II⁵, the simple adjectives was removed and was replaced by a more prestigious word '*Pratapa*'. The legends are generally written in two or three lines, at times with horizontal lines separating each line of the legend.

Kannada and Nagari script was inscribed on the coins of Harihara I, Bukkaraya I, Harihara II, Devaraya I, Devaraya II, Mallikarjuna, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya, Ramaraya, Tirumalaraya, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapthiraya I, Sri Rangaraya III. Bukkaraya II and Vira Narasimha. Vijayaraya I, Vijayaraya II and Ramaraya Venkatadri issued coins in Kannada script. Krishnadevaraya and Sri Rangaraya I both rulers were inscribed coins in Kannada, Nagari and Telugu scripts. Sri Rangaraya II and Venkatapathiraya II both rulers were issued coins in Telugu script only.

KANNADA SCRIPT AND LANGUAGE

The Kannada script derived from Brahmi, it was in use for engraving inscriptions in various regions of the Deccan, the major parts of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and southern parts of Maharashtra. The period of about 300 years (C. A. D. 350-650) was represented by the rule of Kadambas, Chalukyas of Badami and Western Gangas (Karnataka) Salankayanas, Vishnukundins and Eastern Chalukyas (Andhra Pradesh)

Vakatakas (Maharashtra and north of it in central India) and dynasties like the Mauryas of Konkan and their minor dynasties who governed parts of these areas during this period. The development of the scripts in these regions is similar representing almost the same paleographical features⁶ and indicates a give and take in their growth.

From the middle of the twelfth century to fourteenth century, Kannada language and literature underwent a great change. The language, which had borrowed its vocabulary freely from Sanskrit and shared many common features with Telugu and Tamil, and attained a distinct individuality of its own with a richness not surpassed by its sister languages. In literature bold departures from the traditional forms of expression were made, this tendency to seek novel modes of writing being mainly due to the effort of *Virasaiva* teachers. The revolt of Basava⁷ and his associates has against the inhibitions and impositions of social and religious traditions and practices which had outlived their utility and hampered progress. This revolt could be seen in the literature of the period as well.

In the field of literature Sanskrit, Kannada and Telugu flourished alike. The kings patronized all the three languages without any distinction. Inscriptions were written in all three languages and scripts in additions to Tamil. However, their sign manual was '*Virupaksha*' in Kannada⁸. Thus their coins also contain legends in the three scripts of the period.

It is interesting to note that legends in Kannada or in Nagari characters appear on a great number of coins of Vijayanagara. Some kings used only Nagari. Telugu was employed by the mint masters of Sri Rangaraya II and Venkatapathiraya II. This fact indicates the presence of a large number of Nagari using population among the subjects of the Vijayanagara rulers or at least among the users of their coins⁹. In contrast to the emphasis on legend and its beautification by the authorities of Islamic powers of early medieval phase, the Vijayanagara rulers followed the earlier Indian tradition, made iconic representations as the main attraction of their coins¹⁰.

Telugu script

The Telugu script, as with most other Indian scripts, owes its origin to Brahmi one of the two early Indian scripts, the other being Kharoshthi, which was prevalent in northwest India. The earliest Telugu letters, although very few in number, are noticeable in the well-known Bhattiprolu inscription¹¹ which is datable to the third century B. C. A considerable number of Telugu place names, as well as personal names, are found incised on the slabs used in the structures of different parts of the *stupa* edifices at Amravati, Nagarjunakonda and some other Buddhist centres, before and after the dawn of the Christian era¹².

Telugu and Kannada were used in the stone inscriptions up to the fifth-sixth centuries. Telugu and Kannada letters remained the same till the tenth century, hence the script is generally called Telugu-Kannada¹³. It was from the eleventh century on that the two scripts took on slightly distinct forms, though even today the modern letter forms in both scripts are very similar. And it is also a fact that numerous words in both the languages are the same, the difference being only in the case endings.

Fourth century A. D, the period to which the Early Pallava and Salankayana inscriptions belong, is an important period in the process of evolution of the Telugu script. Inscriptions of this period carry place names in Telugu. The same period is important for the evolution of the Kannada script too. The early form of the Telugu-Kannada script is found in the inscriptions of the Kadambas, the Chalukyas of Badami in the west and the Salankayanas and the Vengi Chalukyas in the east, during the period from fourth to seventh century A. D. The point of interest is that both Telugu and Kannada have the same script from this period onwards up to the beginning of the fourteenth century. The complete Telugu inscriptions of the Renati Cholas are in the same Telugu-Kannada script with certain developments in their form. The inscriptions of the Vengi Chalukyan period show a further development in the Telugu script. By the time of the Kakatiya period, the Telugu-Kannada script attains the form almost comparable to the modern script. With a little effort one can decipher well-engraved inscriptions couched in Telugu and Kannada languages. The period of the Reddi and Vijayanagara rulers is an important stage in the




evolution of the Telugu and Kannada scripts¹⁴ as it is from this period onwards that they developed into independent scripts.

The structure of the Vijayanagara currency irrespective of the metal used for coinage was standardized. Most characteristic feature of the Vijayanagara coins is that they are all round in shape and have an image of deity or deities or animals on the obverse. The reverse is divided by lines into two or three lines with name of the king in abbreviated form. King's name is preceded by word '*Pratapa*' or '*Vira*' and ends with '*Raya*'. This distinctive feature of Vijayanagara coins has been maintained in their coins by kings right from Sangama dynasty to the Aravidu and they seemed to have followed Hoyasala pattern in the design of their coins. Kannada was used on the coins of first two rulers of the dynasty and then came Devanagari script. Telugu appeared first on Krishnadevaraya coins and was commonly used on the coins of Aravidu kings who's capital was in the heart of Andhra country. But during the territorial expansion in the south Vijayanagara rulers persisted with the coinage of previous rulers with their initials. For example when they annexed Chola territories the common Chola coin of the bull was on the obverse and the reverse had an image of a man. Vijayanagara rulers continued the same type of bull coins the Chola territories with the addition of kings initial such as 'Ha' for Harihara. They did the same for Venad, Alupa and other regions also. The population of those areas readily accepted the Vijayanagara coins as they respected the previous rulers. In the following pages the different legends found on various coins are discussed i. e., on gold, silver and copper.

SIVA PARVATI TYPE

Gold coins

Harihara II	Devaraya I	Krishnadevaraya	Sadasivaraya
Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari
			
Sri Pra	Sri Pra	Sri	Sri Pra
ta pa Ha ri	tapa Deva	Kri shna ra	tapa Sa da siva
Ha ra.	raya.	ya.	raya.

Silver		Copper
Harihara II	Devaraya I	Devaraya II
Nagari	Nagari	Kannada
		
Sri Prata	Sri Pra	Sri Pra
pa ha ri	tapa Deva	tapa Deva
ha ra.	Raya	raya


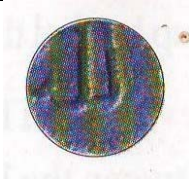

Siva Parvati coins were minted in gold, silver and copper. All the coins were inscribed in Nagari script, except copper coin of the Devaraya II. It is in Kannada script. All coins inscribed the names with title '*Sri Pratapa*' except Krishnadevaraya¹⁵ inscribed his name only.

HANUMAN TYPE

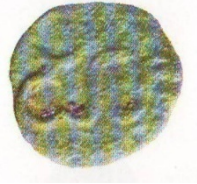


Gold

Harihara I	Bukkaraya I	Harihara II
Kannada	Kannada	Kannada
		
Sri Vi	Sri Vi	Sri Vira
ra ha ri	ra Bukka	Pratapa Ha
ha ra	raya.	raya.

Silver

Harihara I	Bukkaraya I	Devaraya I
Nagari	Kannada	Nagari
		
Sri Vi	Bu	Da
ra ha ri		
ha ra		

Copper

Harihara I	Harihara I	Bukkaraya I	Venkatapatiraya I
Kannada	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari
			
Ha	Hari	Vira Bu	Sri (Venka?)
	Hara	kapathi	ta ra ya
		raya.	

Sri Rangaraya I	Venkatapatiraya II	Venkatapatiraya III	Venkatapatiraya III
Kannada	Nagari	Kannada	Nagari and Kannada
			
Sri	Sri Vem	Ramaraja	Sri
Ranga	katapathira	Tirumala	Ramaraja
	yaru	Venkata.	Timmaraja
			Venkata.

The Hanuman type coins were minted in gold, silver and copper. But all the gold coins were inscribed in Kannada script. Kannada being the local language. However as for the name and honorific title of the emperor were concerned, only emperor Harihara II¹⁶ added the word '*Pratapa*' (valorous one) in addition to '*Sri Vira*'.


Of the silver coins issued, it is found that emperors Harihara I and Devaraya I issued the coins inscribed in Nagari script except the emperor Bukkaraya I who issued the coins in Kannada script. Further it is found that emperors Bukkaraya and Devaraya

abbreviated their names as 'Bu' and 'Da'. However emperor Harihara got his name inscribed in full title i.e. 'Sri Vira Harihara'.

Copper coins were issued in both Kannada and Nagari scripts only Emperor Harihara I got his name inscribed on the coin abbreviated¹⁷ as 'Ha', whereas, the rest of the emperors got their full names with titles inscribed on the coins.

VISHNU TYPE

Copper





Harihara I	Krishnadevaraya	Krishnadevaraya
Nagari	Nagari	Kannada
		
Hari	Sri	Sri Krishna
Hara	pratapa	Raya
	Krishnaraya	

Venkatapathiraya I	Sri Rangaraya I	Sri Rangaraya I	Sri Rangaraya III
Kannada	Kannada	Kannada	Kannada
			
Not Clear	Ranga	Sri Ramga	Sri Ra
	raya.		nga


Vishnu type coins were minted in copper only. The coins were inscribed in Nagari and Kannada scripts. Hari hara I and Krishnadevaraya were issued in Nagari script, whereas Krishnadevaraya, Venkatapathiraya I, Sri Rangaraya I and Sri Rangaraya III were inscribed in Kannada script. All the coins have the name of the issuer, except Krishnadevaraya got his name in full title i.e., *Sri Pratapa Krishnaraya*¹⁸ in Nagari legend.

LAKSHMI NARAYANA TYPE

GOLD

Harihara II	Devaraya I.	Ramachandra	Sadasivaraya
Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari
			
Sri Pra	Sri Pra	Sri Pra	Sri Prata
thapa Hari	thapa Deva	tapa Rama	pa sa da si
Hara	raya.	cha (m) dra	varaya.

Copper

Venkatapathiraya II
Kannada

Sri
Vemkata
Raya

Of the Lakshmi Narayana type of coins were minted in gold and copper. The gold coins issued by Harihara II¹⁹, Devaraya I, Ramachandra and Sadasivaraya were inscribed in Nagari legend in three lines, they used ‘Pratapa’ along with their personal names. Of the copper coin inscribed in Kannada legend in three lines had followed name of the issuer.

BRAHMA SARASWATI TYPE






Gold

Harihara II
Nagari

<i>Sri Pra</i>
<i>tapa Hari</i>
<i>Hara.</i>

Brahma Saraswati types of coins were issued by Harihara II minted in gold only. This coin inscribed in Nagari legend²⁰ in three lines, he used ‘Pratapa’ along with his personal name.


LAKSHMI NARASIMHA TYPE

Gold	Copper			
Harihara II	Vira Narasimha	Sadasivaraya	Ramadevaraya	Sri Rangaraya III
Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Kannada
				
<i>Sri Pra</i>	<i>Nara</i>	<i>Sri Prata</i>	<i>Ra ma</i>	<i>Sri</i>
<i>thapa hari</i>	<i>Simha</i>	<i>pa Sadasiva</i>		<i>Ra (m) ga</i>
<i>hara</i>		<i>raya</i>		

Of the Lakshmi Narasimha type of coins were issued in gold and copper. The gold coin was issued by Harihara II, were inscribed Nagari legend in three lines it is found that his name and honorific title '*Pratapa*' were added to his coins.

Copper coins were issued by Vira Narasimha, Sadasivaraya, Ramadevaraya and Sri Rangaraya III. Except Sri Rangaraya III all rulers were inscribed Nagari legend on their coins. It is found that the name of the issuer except Sadasivaraya got the title '*Sri Pratapa*'²¹.

LAKSHMI TYPE

Gold		Copper	
Harihara II	Krishnadevaraya	Harihara I	Tirumalaraya I
Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari
			
<i>Sri Pra</i>	<i>Sri</i>	<i>Sri</i>	<i>Sri Ti</i>
<i>tapa hari</i>	<i>Pratapa Krishna</i>	<i>Harihara</i>	<i>rumala</i>
<i>hara.</i>	<i>raya.</i>		<i>raya</i>

Lakshmi types of coins were minted in gold and copper. All coins were inscribed in Nagari script. On the gold coins of Harihara II²² and Krishnadevaraya got their personal names with title '*Pratapa*' in three lines. Of the copper coins issued, it is found that Harihara I and Tirumalaraya I inscribed their names only.

SARASWATI TYPE





Gold



Krishnadevaraya
Kannada
<i>Pratapa</i>
<i>Krsna</i>
<i>Raya</i>

Saraswati type²³ coins were minted in gold only. It is found that emperor Krishnadevaraya issued the coin inscribed in Kannada script in three lines found this name and title '*Pratapa*'.



VENKATESWARA TYPE

Gold

Krishnadevaraya	Aliyaramaraya	Venkatapathiraya a I	SriRangaraya I	Venkatapathiraya II
Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari
				
<i>Sri</i>	<i>Sri Pra</i>	<i>Cha la ma</i>	<i>Sri ra (n)</i>	<i>Vira</i>
<i>Kri shna ra</i>	<i>thapa rama</i>	<i>Ven ka ta</i>	<i>ga ra</i>	<i>Venkata</i>
<i>ya</i>	<i>raya</i>	<i>Raya</i>	<i>ya</i>	<i>Raya</i>

Venkatapathiraya II	Venkatapathiraya III	Venkatapathiraya III
Nagari		Nagari
		
<i>0Chalama</i>	Blank	<i>Sri Ven ka</i>
<i>Venkata</i>		<i>te sva ra</i>
<i>Raya</i>		<i>ya na mah</i>




Copper

Aliyaramaraya	Venkatapathiraya II
Nagari and Kannada	Kannada
	
<i>(Sri)</i>	Vemka
<i>Rama</i>	tappa
<i>raya</i>	

The Venkateswara type coins were minted in gold and copper. All the gold coins were inscribed in Nagari script. Aliya Ramaraya inscribed his name with title '*Sri Pratapa*', Venkatapathiraya I inscribed his name as '*Chalama Venkataraya*'²⁴, Venkatapathiraya II inscribed his name '*Vira Venkataraya*' and '*Chalama Venkataraya*'. Venkatapathiraya III was issued the coin is blank. Another type was found with the name *Sri Venkateswaraya namah*.

Copper coins were minted both in Nagari and Kannada scripts. Aliya Ramaraya and Venkatapathiraya II inscribed their names as '*Sri Ramaraya*' and '*Vemkatappa*'.

BALAKRISHNA TYPE


Gold	Copper		
Krishnadevaraya	Krishnadevaraya	Sri Rangaraya I	Venkatapathiraya II
Nagari	Nagari	Telugu	Kannada
			
<i>Sri Pra</i>	<i>Sri</i>	<i>Ranga</i>	<i>Vemka</i>
<i>ta pa Kri shna</i>	<i>Pratapa,</i> <i>Krishna</i>	<i>raya</i>	<i>tappa</i>
<i>ra ya</i>	<i>Raya</i>		

Balakrishna type coins were minted in gold and copper. On the gold coin of Krishnadevaraya²⁵ it is found that three lines Nagari legend got his name with title ‘*Sri Pratapa*’

Copper coins were issued in Nagari, Telugu and Kannada scripts. Krishnadevaraya inscribed Nagari legend as the gold type coin. Sri Rangaraya I inscribed Telugu legend in two lines found his name. Venkatapathiraya III inscribed Kannada script in two lines as his name Venkatappa.

SRI RAMA-SITA-LAKSHMANA TYPE





Gold

Tirumalaraya I
Nagari

<i>Sri Ti</i>
<i>Ruma lara</i>
<i>yalu</i>

Sri Rama-Sita-Lakshmana type of coin was minted in gold only. It is found that Tirumalaraya I issued the coin, inscribed in Nagari script²⁶ in three lines of his name.

SANKHA – CHAKRA TYPE

Copper



Tirumalaraya I	Venkatapathiraya II	Venkatapathiraya II	Ramadevaraya
Nagari	Kannada	Kannada	Nagari
			
(cha)	“Ve”	“Vem”	Ra ma
La ma			
Ra ya			

The *Sankha-Chakra* type coins were minted in copper only. The coins were inscribed in Nagari and Kannada scripts. Tirumalaraya I²⁷ and Ramadevaraya issued in Nagari legend. Tirumalaraya I got his name has ‘*Chalamaraya*’ in three lines. Whereas Ramadevaraya got his name has abbreviated ‘Rama’.

Venkatapathiraya II was inscribed on his coins in Kannada. It is found that his name as abbreviated ‘*Ve*’, and ‘*Vem*’²⁸(first letter of Venkatapathiraya II).

PARABOLA TYPE


Copper

Sri Rangaraya I	Venkatapathiraya II
Kannada	Kannada
	
(Vi) Ra Ram	“ Ve”
gar a (ya)	

Parabola type of coins were minted in copper only. The coins were inscribed in Kannada only. On the coins of Sri Rangaraya I, it is found that his name with title ‘*Vira*’ in two lines were noticed. But on the coins of Venkatapathiraya II, his name as abbreviated²⁹ ‘*Ve*’. (it is the first letter of Venkatapathiraya II) was found.

BOW AND ARROW TYPE


Copper

Venkatapathiraya II
Kannada

“Ve”

Bow and Arrow type coins were minted in copper only. This coin was issued by Venkatapathiraya II, it is found that a letter in Kannada³⁰ ‘*Ve*’ is noticed.(the first letter of Venkatapathiraya II)

DAGGER TYPE


Copper

Tirumalaraya I
Nagari

<i>Sri Ti</i>
<i>rumala</i>
<i>raya</i>

Dagger³¹ type of coins was issued by Tirumalaraya I minted in copper only. The coin inscribed Nagari legend in three lines of his name.

DAMARUGA



Copper

Venkatapathiraya II
Kannada

“Ve”

*Damaruga*³² type of coins issued by Venkatapathiraya II, minted in copper only. The coin was inscribed in Kannada script. It is found that a single letter ‘Ve’ is noticed.

Hill

Copper

Venkatapathiraya II	Sri Rangaraya III
Kannada	Kannada
	
“ Ve”	<i>Sri</i>
	<i>Ranga</i>

Hill type coins were minted in copper only. The coins were inscribed in Kannada script. On the coins of Venkatapathiraya II, it is found that his name is abbreviated as Kannada single letter ‘Ve’, whereas on the coins of Sri Rangaraya III it is found that his name in Kannada script³³ in two lines.

ANIMAL MOTIFS


TIGER TYPE

Copper

Harihara I
Kannada
<i>Hari</i>
<i>hara.</i>




Tiger³⁴ type of coin was minted in copper only. The coin was inscribed in Kannada script. Harihara I got his name in two lines.

LION TYPE

Silver	Copper	
Devaraya II	Harihara I	Sadasivaraya
Nagari	Kannada	Nagari
		
<i>Sri Deva</i>	<i>Ha ri</i>	<i>(Sri) Sa</i>
<i>(Ra) ya</i>	<i>Ha ra</i>	<i>Da Si (va)</i>
		<i>(raya</i>


The lion type coins were minted in silver and copper. The coins were inscribed in Nagari and Kannada scripts. Silver coin of the Devaraya II, inscribed in Nagari legend in two lines contain his name 'Sri Deva raya'³⁵. The copper coins also contain their names only.

ELEPHANT TYPE

Gold		Silver		
Devaraya II	Vira Narasimha	Devaraya II	Mallikarjuna	Tirumalaraya I
Nagari	Kannada	Nagari	Kannada	Nagari
				
<i>Sri De</i>	<i>Vira</i>	<i>Deva</i>	<i>Yima</i>	<i>(Sri Cha)</i>
<i>varaya</i>	<i>Narasimha</i>	<i>Raya</i>	<i>Di deva</i>	<i>Lama</i>
			<i>Raya</i>	<i>raya</i>

Copper

Devaraya II	Devaraya II	Vijayaraya II	Mallikarjuna
Nagari	Nagari	Kannada	Kannada
			
<i>Raya ga</i>	<i>Gajavetakara</i>	<i>Vi ja</i>	<i>Malli</i>
<i>Jaga (m) de</i>	<i>Sri</i>	<i>Ya raya</i>	<i>Karjuna ra</i>
<i>b (e)</i>	<i>Devaraya</i>		<i>Yaru</i>
<i>Ru (m) da.</i>			

Krishnadevaraya	Achyutaraya	Sadasivaraya	Tirumalaraya I
Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari
			
Sri prathapa	<i>Sri Prata</i>	<i>Sada</i>	<i>Sri Cha</i>
Krishna	<i>Pachyuta</i>	<i>Siva</i>	<i>lama</i>
Raya	<i>Raya</i>		<i>raya</i>



The Elephant type coins were minted in gold , silver and copper. The gold coins were inscribed in Nagari and Kannada scripts. Devaraya II was inscribed in Nagari legend³⁶ in two lines, found his name as ‘Sri Devaraya’. On the coins of Vira Narasimha found his name in Kannada legend in two lines.

Silver type of coins were issued, by Devaraya II, Mallikarjuna and Triumalaraya I. Except Mallikarjuna rest of the rulers issued in Nagari script. On the coins of Devaraya II found his name in Nagari script in two lines. On the coins of Mallikarjuna found his, another name Yimmadi Devarya in Kannada legend in three lines. On the coins of Tirumalaraya I found his name as Chalamaraya³⁷ in Nagari legend.

Copper coins were issued in both Nagari and Kannada scripts. The coins of Devaraya II, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya and Tirumalaraya I were inscribed in Nagari script. On the coins of Devaraya II was inscribed his title in Nagari as ‘Raya gajagandaberunda’³⁸, another coin is found ‘Gajavetakara Sri Devaraya’³⁹. Krishnadevaraya and Achyutaraya were inscribed their personal names with title ‘Sri Pratapa’. Sadasivarya inscribed his name only. Whereas Tirumalaraya I inscribed his name as Sri Chalamaraya.

Vijayaraya and Mallikarjuna were inscribed in Kannada script with their names.

HORSE TYPE



Gold	Copper	
Achyutharaya	Sadasivaraya	Sriranga -III
Nagari	Nagari	Kannada
		
<i>Sri (pra)</i>	<i>Sada</i>	<i>Sri</i>
<i>(ta) pachyu (ta)</i>	<i>ma ha.</i>	<i>Ramga</i>
<i>(Raya).</i>		

Horse type of coins were minted in gold and copper. The coins were inscribed in Nagari and Kannada scripts. On the gold coin of Achyutaraya was found his name with title ‘Sri Pratapa’ in Nagari legend⁴⁰.

Copper coins were issued in both Nagari and Kannada scripts. On the coins of Sadasivaraya found his name as ‘*Sadamaha*’⁴¹ in Nagari script, where as Sri Rangaraya III inscribed his name in Kannada script in two lines.



VARAHA TYPE

Copper

Achyutharaya	Tirumalaraya I	Tirumalaraya I	Sri Rangaraya III
Kannada	Nagari	Kannada	Kannada
			
<i>taraya</i>	<i>Sri Ti</i>	<i>Sri Ti</i>	<i>Sri</i>
<i>achu</i>	<i>ru mala</i>	<i>ru mala</i>	<i>Ranga</i>
	<i>raya</i>	<i>raya.</i>	

Varaha type coins were minted in copper only. The coins were inscribed in Kannada and Nagari. It is found that Achyutaraya, Tirumalaraya I and Sri Ranagaraya III issued the coins inscribed in Kannada legend. On the coins of Achyutaraya, inscribed his name in Kannada legend as ‘taraya achu’⁴², it is mistake. The second line came first, the first line found in second line. On the coins of Tirumalaraya I and Sri Rangaraya III were inscribed their names in Kannada script. Tirumalaraya I was also inscribed his name in Nagari legend in three lines.




FISH TYPE

Gold	Copper
Harihara II	Venkatapathiraya II
Nagari	Kannada
	
<i>Sri</i>	“Ve”
<i>Pandya</i>	
<i>Danumjaya</i>	

Fish type coins were minted in gold and copper. The coins were inscribed in Nagari and Kannada scripts. It is found that the gold coins of Harihara II inscribed the legend in Nagari, found the Pandyan name as Sri Pandya Danumjaya⁴³. This tradition was taken from the Pandyan style. Copper coins were issued in Kannada script only. Venkatapathiraya II got his name inscribed on the coin abbreviated as Kannada single letter ‘Ve’(the first letter of his name).

PEACOCK TYPE


Copper

Sri Rangaraya -I	Venkatapatiraya II	Sri Rangaraya-III
Nagari	Kannada	Kannada
		
<i>Sri Ran</i>	“Ve”	<i>Sri</i>
<i>Garaya</i>		<i>Ranga</i>

Peacock type coins were minted in copper only. The coins inscribed in Nagari and Kannada scripts. On the coins of Sri Rangaraya I as inscribed his name in Nagari legend in two lines. Venkatapathiraya II and Sri Rangaraya III were inscribed in Kannada scripts. Venkatapathiraya II got his name abbreviated as ‘Ve’, whereas Sri Rangaraya III⁴⁴ inscribed his name in Kannada script.

CAMEL TYPE


Copper

Sri Rangaraya III
Kannada

<i>Sri</i>
<i>Ranga</i>




Camel type coin was minted in copper only. Sri Rangaraya III⁴⁵ was inscribed his name in Kannada legend.





BULL TYPE




Silver





Mallikarjuna
Nagari

<i>Mali</i>
<i>ka rjuna</i>
<i>raya.</i>

Copper

Harihara I Kannada	Harihara I Nagari	Bukkaraya I Kannada	Harihara II Nagari	Bukkaraya II Nagari
				
<i>Ha</i>	<i>Sri Hari</i>	<i>Bu</i>	<i>Pratapa</i>	<i>Vija</i>
	<i>Hara</i>		<i>Ha ri ha ra</i>	<i>ya Buka</i>
				<i>ra ya</i>

Devaraya I Kannada	Devaraya I Nagari	Ramachandra Kannada	Vijayaraya I Nagari	Vijayaraya I Kannada
				
<i>Sri De va</i>	<i>Sri De va</i>	<i>Rama</i>	<i>Vija</i>	<i>Sri Jaya</i>
<i>raya</i>	<i>raya</i>	<i>Chandra</i>	<i>Ya Bukka</i>	<i>Raya</i>
			<i>Raya</i>	

Krishnadevaraya	Sadasivaraya	Aliyaramaraya	Tirumalaraya I	Tirumalaraya I
Kannada	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari
				
<i>Sri Krishna</i>	<i>Pra ta</i>	<i>Rama</i>	<i>(Cha)</i>	<i>Sri Ti</i>
<i>Raya</i>	<i>pa sa</i>	<i>Raja</i>	<i>la ma</i>	<i>rumala</i>
	<i>(dasiva)</i>		<i>raya</i>	<i>raya</i>

Sri Rangaraya I	Venkatapatiraya II	SriRangaraya II	Sri Rangaraya II	Sri Rangaraya III
Kannada	Nagari & Kannada	Telugu	Kannada	Kannada
				
Sri Rangaraya	<i>Sri</i>	<i>Chi ka ra</i>	<i>Chi ka ra</i>	<i>Sri</i>
	<i>Venkata</i>	<i>ya lu</i>	<i>ya lu</i>	<i>Ram</i>
	<i>Raya</i>			<i>Ga</i>

Of the bull type coins were minted in silver and copper. The coins were inscribed in Nagari, Kannada and Telugu scripts. Silver coins were issued by Mallikarjuna⁴⁶. He issued the coins inscribed in Nagari legend found his in three lines.


Copper coins were issued in Kannada, Nagari and Telugu scripts. The Emperors Harihara I, Bukkaraya I, Devaraya I, Ramachandra, Vijayaraya I, Krishnadevaraya, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapathiraya II, Sri Rangaraya II and Sri Rangaraya III were inscribed their names on the coins in Kannada script. Harihara I and Bukkaraya I got their names

inscribed on the coin abbreviated as Kannada single letter ‘Ha’ and ‘Bu’⁴⁷ the first letter of Harihara I and Bukkaraya I. Sri Rangaraya II got his name as Chikarayalu in Kannada script. While the rest of the rulers got their names only.





Nagari script was inscribed by Harihara I, Harihara II, Bukkaraya II, Devaraya I, Vijayaraya I, Sadasivaraya, Aliyaramaraya and Tirumalaraya I. Harihara II and Sadasivaraya got their full names with title ‘Pratapa’. Bukkaraya II and Vijayaraya I got their full title that is Vijaya Bukkaraya, Tirumalaraya I was inscribed his name as Chalamaraya⁴⁸. On the coins of Sri Rangaraya II was inscribed Telugu script. On this coins got his name as Chikarayalu⁴⁹.





GARUDA TYPE



Gold

Bukkaraya I	Harihara II	Venkatapathiraya II
Kannada	Kannada	Kannada
		
<i>Sri Vi</i>	<i>Sri Vi</i>	<i>Vemkata</i>
<i>(ra) Buka</i>	<i>ra Hari</i>	
<i>(r)aya</i>	<i>hara</i>	

Copper

Harihara I	Devaraya I	Krishnadevaraya	Achyutaraya	Achyutaraya
Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari
				
Ha	<i>Sri Prata</i>	<i>Sri Pra</i>	<i>Sri Achyuta</i>	<i>Prata</i>
	<i>Pa deva</i>	<i>ta pa Kri shna</i>	<i>raya</i>	<i>Pachyuta</i>
	<i>raya.</i>	<i>ra ya</i>		

Sadasivaraya	Sadasivaraya	Tirumalaraya I	Tirumalaraya I	Ramaraya Venkatadri
Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Kannada
				
<i>Sri Sa da</i>	<i>Sri Prata</i>	<i>Sri Ti</i>	<i>(Cha)</i>	<i>Ramara (ya)</i>
<i>si va ra</i>	<i>Pa Sadashiva</i>	<i>rumala</i>	<i>La ma</i>	<i>Venkatadri.</i>
<i>ya lu</i>	<i>raya</i>	<i>raya.</i>	<i>Ra ya</i>	

Sri Rangaraya I	Venkatapathiraya III	Venkatapathiraya III
Kannada	Kannada	Nagari
		
<i>Sri</i>	<i>Ramaraja</i>	<i>Sri</i>
<i>Rangara</i>	<i>Venkata</i>	<i>Ramaraja</i>
<i>ya.</i>	<i>Raya</i>	<i>Venkata</i>
		<i>Raya</i>




The Garuda type coins were minted in gold and copper. The coins were inscribed in Kannada and Nagari scripts. All the gold coins were inscribed in Kannada scripts. The gold coins of Bukkaraya I and Harihara II were inscribed their full names with title ‘Sri Vira’⁵⁰.

Copper coins were issued in both Nagari and Kannada scripts. Harihara I, Devaraya I, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya, Sadasivarya, Tirumalarya I and Venkatapathiraya III were inscribed their full names with title. Except Harihara I got his name inscribed on the coin abbreviated as ‘ha’⁵¹ (the first letter of his name) it is found that “Sri Pratapa’ as the title of Devaraya I, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya and Sadasivaraya. Tirumalaraya I got

his name as Chalamaraya in Nagari legend. Venkatapathiraya III inscribed his name as ‘Sri Ramaraja venkataraya’ in Kannada and Nagari scripts.

Ramaraya Venkatadri, Sri Rangaraya I and Venkatapathiraya III issued the coins in Kannada legend. Except, Venkatapathiraya III got his name as ‘Ramaraja Venkataraya’⁵² in three lines. The rest of the rulers got their names only.

GANDABERUNDA TYPE

Gold	Copper		
Achyutaraya	Achyutaraya	Sadasivaraya	Sri Rangaraya I
Nagari	Nagari	Nagari	Nagari and Kannada
			
<i>Sri Pra</i>	<i>Sri Pra</i>	<i>Sri Prata</i>	<i>Sri</i>
<i>ta pa chyuta</i>	<i>tapa chyuta</i>	<i>Pa Sadasiva</i>	<i>Ra (n) ga ra</i>
<i>ra ya</i>	<i>Raya</i>	<i>Raya</i>	<i>ya.</i>

Gandaberunda type coins were minted in gold and copper. All the coins were inscribed in Nagari script. Achyutaraya issued gold and copper type of coins. Both coins were inscribed the name and title ‘Sri Pratapa’ in Nagari⁵³ legend. Sadasivaraya⁵⁴ also got his name with title ‘Sri Pratapa’. Sri Rangaraya I inscribed his name only.

The Vijayanagara rulers started with the simple title *Vira* along with their personal names as in the case of Harihara I and Bukkaraya I. Harihara II perhaps to distinguish his own coins from those of his predecessor Hairihara II introduced a more honorific title *pratapa* on his coins and this practice became quite popular with almost all the kings of the dynasty. The kings Harihara II, Devaraya I, Devaraya II, Sri Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya, and Sadasivaraya used the title *pratapa* along with their personal names. The title *pratapa* is very helpful in distinguishing the coins of Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagara and Krishnaraja Wodeyar of Mysore; Sadasivaraya of Vijayanagara and Sadasiva Nayaka

of Keladi. The absence of the title *pratapa* on the coins of Nayakas and Wadeyars is the only identifying clue in this regard⁵⁵.

The titles of the kings had become so famous that the people could recognize the kings on the basis of their titles. Naturally, such kings took pride in these titles and used them on their coins in place of personal names. In the case of Devaraya II was a great enthusiast and expert in elephant sports and his titles *Rayagajagandaberunda* and *Gajabetakara* had become famous. Even foreign travellers refer to them. Hence for some of his copper coins, he used only these titles and not his personal name⁵⁶.

Another interesting factor with regard to Vijayanagara rulers is that during their territorial expansion they respected the previous rulers pattern of coins as said above and naturally population of those areas readily accepted their coinage.

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Chapter - IV

The epigraphs of the Vijayanagara period are written in four languages viz. Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu and Tamil. These epigraphs contain very valuable information on various aspects of the Vijayanagara coins and currency system. Unfortunately so far this data has not been pressed into service by the numismatists for understanding the coinage of Vijayanagara period. A detailed understanding of the sub-texts will throw light on the economic dimension of the Vijayanagara coinage as it is evident that fifty percent of the Vijayanagara inscriptions refer to the coins as medium of exchange in several transactions.

The epigraphs of the Vijayanagara period furnish most important and descriptive information about the varieties of coins. Coins are distinguished on the basis of the mints, symbols, metals, and their values. The names of the coins like *Gadyana*, *Varaha gadyana*, *Dodda gadyana*, *Pratapa gadyana*, *Kati gadyana*, *Rekha gadyana*, *Rekha gatti varaha gadyana*, *Kathari ankusha gadyana*, *Kula gadyana*, *Hittuvali gadyana*, *Samudaya gadyana*, *Dodda varaha*, *Ghatti varaha*, *Sudda varaha*, *Chakra varaha*, *Hanumantharaya varaha*, *Venkatapatiraya varaha*, *Gandikota varaha*, *Sanna pratapa*, *Mada*, *Pana*, *Honnu*, *Hana*, *Kati honnu*, *Gajabentakara hon*, *Bele*, *Ruka*, *Tara*, *Panam* and *Kasu* etc., are furnished by the inscriptions and literary works. The *gadyana* was the most popular coin of the Vijayanagara period.

Naming the coins after the mint place was also followed during the Vijayanagara period. Coins were named after the mints located at Barakuru, Mangaluru, Tirupati, Adoni, Tadipatri, Gutti, Nellore and Madurai. Barakuru and Mangaluru which were the provincial capitals of Tulu Nadu during Vijayanagara period. The *gadyanas* that were minted are referred to as Barakuru *gadyana* and Mangaluru *gadyana* respectively¹. Adoni (Adavani) and Tadipatri had mints where the gold *honnu* was minted and is known by a Kannada work *Manamiyachaupada*. *Hons* minted at Gutti called Gutti *honnu* is known from the same work². Some coins bear the letters *Ne* and *Ma* on the obverse and they are presumed to represent Nellore and Madurai which were important places during the Vijayanagara period.

Gadyana

Gadyana was a most popular coin during Vijayanagara period. The epigraphs are mentioned variously as *gadya*, *gadyana* and *gadyanaka*, whereas, in Vijayanagara inscriptions the coin *varaha*, *varaha-gadyana* i.e. *gadyana* with varaha emblem on it was mentioned. Curiously it is not found mentioned in the inscriptions of the early period. The coins *gadyana*, *varaha* and *mada* were of the same value and were more popular during this period³.

Varaha gadyana

Varaha gadyana was the most popular coin during the Vijayanagara period. Generally *varaha* and *gadyana* denoted the same coin of gold, but in the epigraphs of this period, the term *varaha gadyana* is used frequently to indicate equal in weight and value. It is generally accepted *varaha* and *gadyana* are synonymous. *Varaha* of the earlier period though made of gold, did not contain the emblem of *varaha* except in the case of the Chalukyas of Badami. Later, *varaha* became the name of a gold coin even though it did not contain a boar on it. However, the Vijayanagara rulers issued *gadyana* coins with boar on the obverse⁴.

The term *varaha-gadyana* is found in many inscriptions of the period. For example an inscription of 1386 A. D. of the time of Harihara II referred to a grant of 60 *varaha-gadyanas* to an individual⁵.

Another inscription of 1514 A. D., belonging to the time of Krishnadevaraya from Kahalli near Mysore, mentions the total revenue of the village as 130 *gadyanas* and 2 *varahas*⁶. Another inscription of 1532 A. D. of the time of Achyutaraya refers to 1350 *varaha-gadyanas* as the gift for the services rendered in the temple⁷. *Gadyana* as a coin was used in revenue transactions, such as sale of land, payment of tax, gift in cash to temples etc., *Varaha* as a coin was used in transactions of social nature such as a gift in religious ceremonies like *upanayana*, and marriage etc but a detailed study of the inscriptions of the period does not support this view. Hence the above conjecture of the exclusive significance attached to *gadyana* and *varaha* cannot be accepted. It appeared that the *gadyana* slowly lost its importance as compared to *varaha*.

DODDA GADYANA AND CHIKKA GADYANA

*Dodda gadyana*⁸ and *Chikka gadyana* literally mean 'big' or large *gadyana* and 'small' *gadyana*. It is not known if the adjective '*dodda*' refers to the size or the weight of the coin. The ordinary *gadyana* of the Vijayanagara period weighed 52 grains. However, Krishnadevaraya minted a special type of *gadyana* in honour of Lord Venkatesvara of Tirupati which weighed 117 grains, and it is generally referred to as 'double *gadyana*' or a 'double *varaha*'. Hence, it may be surmised that double *gadyana* coin, became famous as *dodda-gadyana*. The normal *gadyana* coin measured about half an inch in diameter, whereas, the double *gadyana* measured three fourths of an inch. The word *Chikka-gadyana* refers to the ordinary *gadyana* which is smaller in size as well as lesser in weight⁹.

PRATAPA GADYANA

Pratapa gadyana and *Pongadyana* referred to combination of *varahagadyana*. *Pratapa* as a coin was introduced by Harihara II¹⁰. On the obverse of the coin, the legend *pratapa* was followed by the name of the king. It was half a *gadyana* in value and weighed 26 grains. These types of coins became famous as *pratapa gadyanas* in course of time. Similarly *pon* or *hon* was a coin and was equal to the *gadyana* or *varaha* in value and weighed 52 grains. Though, the significance of the combination *pon gadyana* cannot be understood without any further detail from the inscriptions.

An inscription from the Srikalahasti temple is traced to Krishnadevaraya dated 1511 A. D refers to 850 *pon* was gifted to the god Srikalahastisvara¹¹. Another inscription from the same place got carved out by Achyutaraya dated 1538 A. D. refers to 60 *pons* gifted to the temple¹².

KATI GADYANA

The word *kati* is used not only with *gadyana* but also with other terms like *kati-hon*, *kati-hana* and *kati-varaha*. The literal meaning of the word *kati* is 'one fourth' and hence, *kati-gadyana* should be taken to mean one fourth of a *gadyana*. In fact gold coins of the period weigh 52, 26 and 13 grains and obviously the *kati-gadyana* weighed 13 grains. As coins of this weight are found in plenty, it may be inferred that *kati gadyana* was quite a

popular coin during the Vijayanagara period. Some examples may be cited to illustrate this point.

An inscription dated 1406 A. D. which belonged to Bukkaraya II refers to *kati-gadyana* five times in different contexts¹³. In first occurrence the word is written fully as *kati-gadyana* but in later references it is simply abbreviated as ‘*KaGa*’. This also reflects the popularity of the coin. But one thing that cannot be explained is the reference to huge number of *kati-gadyanas* instead of expressing the same in terms of *gadyanas*.

Another inscription of the time of Mallikarjuna refers to an annual income of 1697 *katigadyanas* to *SankaraBharati*¹⁴. In the above case, 1697 *kati-gadyanas* are equal to 424 *gadyanas* and 1 *kati-gadyana*. But it is not mentioned so in the inscription and this is difficult to explain.

Ardha kati-gadyana also occurs in epigraphs of the period and obviously it is referred as half of a *kati-gadyana* or one eighth of a *gadyana*. This is mentioned in an inscription of the time of Achyutaraya dated 1542 A. D.¹⁵. This epigraph registers a payment totalling to 67 and half *katigadyana* was made to an individual.

REKHA-GADYANA

The exact significance of this coin is not clear. It is found mentioned in one of the inscriptions from Kalahasti belonging to the reign of Achyutaraya. It records the grant of annual total revenue amounting to 4500 *Rekha-gadyanas* for various specified offerings to the god Kalahatisvara¹⁶.

REKHA-GHATTI-VARAHA-GADYANA

This is used as a synonym of *gadyana* in one of the inscriptions from *Chinna-Ahobalam*. It belongs to the reign of Sadasiva and is dated 1552 A. D. It records the gift of a village, which was sold for 500 *Rekha-gatti-varaha-gadyanas* and paid into the temple treasury of the god Ahobalesvara. Since *Varaha* and *Gadyana* are synonyms, we may take this coin as *Rekha-gatii-varaha* or *Rekha-gatti-gadyana*. In Telugu *gatti* means ‘strong’ and hence this may denote a coin of sterling quality¹⁷.

CHAKRA GADYANA

During the Vijayanagara period, reference to coins by the symbols they contained was resorted to. There is a reference to *Chakra-gadyana* in an inscription of the period¹⁸. Literally it means a *gadyana* with a *chakra* on it. However, it has to be noted that no Vijayanagara coin contains exclusively a *chakra* on it. But '*chakra*' is found along with other, symbols like *sankha*. The gold coins of Harihara II showing Lakshmi-Narayana and Lakshmi-Narasimha contain *sankha* and *chakra* as attributes. A copper coin of Tirumalaraya contains on the obverse a *sankha* to the left and a *chakra* to the right.

This coin was found mentioned in the Vijayanagara inscriptions. Obviously it bore the *Sudarsana-chakra* emblem and hence came to be known as *chakra-gadyana*. *Chakra-varaha* is another name by which this coin is referred to in inscriptions¹⁹. An inscription from *Chinna-Ahobilam*, belonging to the reign of Sadasivaraya is interesting in that it mentions *rekha-chakra-gadyana* and *chakra-varaha* as synonyms²⁰.

KATHARI ANKUSA GADYANA

The term *kathari* means a 'dagger' and *ankusa* is a 'goad'. *Kathariankusagadyana* was mentioned in an inscription of Harihara II from Puttige and dated 1389 A.D.²¹. The inscription states that Mudiya, the watchman was to be paid *kathari ankusa gadyana* as his salary. *Kathari* and *ankusa* both are generally associated with elephants; it is quite likely that this coin refers to the *gadyanas* issued by Devaraya II. Though a *dagger* has been sighted on these coins, *ankusa* has not been seen on these coins²².

KULA GADYANA – HITTUVALI GADYANA - SAMUDAYA GADYANA

The terms like *kulagadyana*, *hittuvali gadyana* and *samudayagadyana* are mentioned in inscriptions. These names of the coin with the taxes were also in practice during the Vijayanagara period. An inscription from Gubbi of the time of Harihara II mentions *kula gadyana* and *hittuvali gadyana* as taxes. Similarly, *samudayagadyana* was a tax to be paid by the *samudaya* or group of villages²³.

DODDA VARAHA

Dodda varaha literally meaning ‘double *varaha*’ and it contains 117 grains minted by Krishnadevaraya, as against the ordinary *varaha* of 52 grains. In both weight and size it was a big (*dodda*) *varaha* as it weighed 117 grains and measured 0.75 in diameter. In order to distinguish this coin from the ordinary *varahas* of 52 grains and of 0.45 in diameter, this term *dodda varaha* was used in the period. An epigraph of the time of Sadasivaraya refers to a gift of 35 *doddavarahas* as interest on 350 *varahas*²⁴. It is of importance to note that the principle is mentioned in terms of *varahas*, whereas, interest is mentioned in terms of *doddavarahas*. As already observed in the case of *dodda gadyana*, *dodda varaha* is also a ‘big’ *varaha* perhaps referring to the double *varaha* coin minted by Krishnadevaraya.

GHATTI VARAHA

In Telugu *ghatti* means ‘strong’ and hence this may be denoting a coin of superior quality. *Ghatti varaha* can be literally translated as ‘solid *varaha*’ but this does not help us in understanding the real nature of the *varaha* referred to. There is also another expression *nijaghatti varaha* where *nija* is used to emphasise the point that it is *ghatti varaha*. An epigraph of Sadasivaraya dated 1552 A D refers to a gift of *ghatti varahas*²⁵. Another epigraph from Suttur near Mysore of the time of Tirumalaraya also refers to gift of 40 *ghattivarahas*²⁶. The same epigraph was also referring to *ghatti gadyana* and from the context it appears that both refer to one and the same coin.

SUDDHA VARAHA

The term *suddha varaha* means ‘pure *varaha*’. Obviously, it refers to the percentage of gold content in it. In the absence of any analysis of gold content in Vijayanagara coins, it is difficult to understand the term. However, epigraphical evidence throws some light on it. An inscription of the period refers to three different gold contents of the coins as eight, eight and half and nine²⁷. It is also known from Barbosa that gold coins were rather ‘base’. The inspectors of coins always carried a touchstone to test the fineness of the coins. From these references, it can easily be surmised that, fineness of gold coins differed. Hence the term *suddha varaha* refers to those coins which had the highest percentage of gold content in them.

CHAKRA VARAHA

Chakra varaha is obviously the same as *chakra gadyana* which contained a *chakra* on the *varaha* coins. However, it has to be noted that *chakra* appears in the hands of the deities on the *varaha* coins and not as an independent symbol²⁸.

HANUMANTHARAYA VARAHA AND VENKATAPATIRAYI VARAHA

Hanumantharaya varaha and *Venkatapatiraya varaha* are those coins which contained the image of Venkatesvara and Hanuman on them. Coins with the image of Hanuman was minted the rulers like Harihara I, Bukkaraya I and Venkatapatiraya I²⁹. Krishnadevaraya introduced the practice of minting the portrait of Venkatesvara and this was continued by the later rulers Sri Rangaraya, Venkatapatiraya I and Venkatapatiraya II.

GANDIKOTA VARAHA

Gandikota *varaha* is the coin minted at Gandikota a famous fort, now in Cuddappah district of Andhra Pradesh. It is evident that there was a Vijayanagara mint in Gandikota³⁰.

SANNA PRATAPA

Sanna pratapa literally means a ‘small *pratapa*’. It is known that *pratapa* was half of a *gadyana*. This presupposes the existence of a big *pratapa* different from the *sanna pratapa* or small *pratapa*. It is mentioned in an inscription of 1477 A. D.³¹ and refers to the purchase of a house by paying 400 *sanna pratapas*.

MADA and MADAI

Mada was a popular gold coin throughout the Andhra County. During the medieval period, a number of inscriptions mention *mada* and *gadyana* as synonyms. Some inscriptions from Sikakulam district refer *mada* and *nishka* as synonyms. In the Sanskrit portion of epigraphs the coin is mentioned as *nishka* while the Telugu portion refers to the same coin as *mada*³².

The kings of Vijayanagara minted coins called *mada* also. But their use was limited as compared to *varaha* and *gadyana*. An inscription of 1386 A. D. issued during the period of Harihara II records the sale of a land for a sum of 200 *Singayamadas*³³. Another epigraph of the time of Devaraya II describes the cost of construction of a dam as 300 *singaya madas*³⁴. As the word, *singa* literally means a lion, it may be surmised that these *mada* coins might have had lion on them. Achyutaraya *mada* is mentioned in an inscription of the time of Srirangaraya I, dated 1578 A. D. from Bellary District³⁵. This is a Telugu inscription. It mentions the sale of a land for 84 *Achyutarayamadavarahagadyanas*. Obviously, this reference shows that it was a *gadyana* and as the people of the area were more familiar with the term *mada* (in Telugu), this term has been used.

It is suggested that *dharana* was another name of *mada* which was more popularly known as *Purana*³⁶. In a couple of inscriptions from Andhra, *dharanam* is mentioned as a fraction of *mada*³⁷. But their relative value is not given in the inscription. One of the inscriptions of Vijayanagara Sadasivaraya, dated 1545 A. D. from Anantapur District, recorded the gift of one *mada* and one *dharanam* per month for maintaining a perpetual lamp³⁸.

Madai was a gold coin current in olden days and was also known as *Pon*. An inscription from the Srikalahasti, belonging to the Devaraya, a *pon* was equal to a *pagoda*. In one instance, it is said to be equal to a *varaham*³⁹ and in another instance, to 10 *panam*⁴⁰.

PANA

Pana coin seems to have been introduced by the Western Chalukyan kings. This coin became more popular during the Vijayanagara period. It is stated that *Pana* was a gold coin; ten *Panas* were equal to one *Gadyana*⁴¹.

HONNU AND HANA

Honnu and *Hana* are referred to in many Vijayanagara inscriptions. An inscription from Chikkanapura in Gundlupet taluk dated 1412 A. D. refers to a transaction in which 270 *hanas* are said to be equal to 27 *hons* 27 *honnus*⁴² From this it becomes clear that one

honnu was equal to ten *hanas*. It is generally believed that *honnu* is a gold coin. An inscription dated 1405 A.D., belonging to the reign of Devaraya records that on the representation of the temple priests, king Vira Devaraya I, confirmed the gift of the village Tammadivarahalli and the income of 25 *Honnus* derived from the *Kanika* realized from the Sivaratri festivals formerly made Kamnannodeya and Chikkodeya to god Mallikarjuna at Chandragiri and recorded that 20 *Honnus* that were being paid to the place till then be remitted to the temple. The Vijayanagara inscription refers to *bellihonnu* meaning silver hon. This is really interesting. The inscription dated to Krishnadevaraya period, referred to a series of transactions in which silver *honnu* was referred⁴³. Perhaps in this context, *honnu* was simply used in the general sense of a coin, and not a particular coin itself.

The word *hana* in Kannada refers to money in general as well as a particular coin. It is not known in what way this coin was different from either a *pratapa* or a *hana*. *Hana* is also mentioned along with taxes like *manehana* and *nogahana*⁴⁴. An inscription from Ummattur dated to 1416 A. D. refers to *honnu hana*⁴⁵. Tirupati *hana* is either a coin minted in Tirupati or the coin with the god of Tirupati on it embossed portrayed⁴⁶.

KATI HONNU

The word *kati* occurs in Kannada literary works as a small coin. The word *kati* means ‘one fourth’ and *honnu* is equal to a *gadyana* or *varaha*, and *kati honnu* means one fourth of a *varaha*. *Kati honnu* is mentioned in an inscription of the time of Krishnadevaraya dated 1515 A. D.⁴⁷ It refers to the visit of Sringeri Swamiji to Hampi and the gift of two villages Hayyuru and Honnagalli which yielded 362 and 150 *kati honnu* respectively. In that case it becomes difficult to understand the necessity of mentioning 362 *kati honnu* which could have been better expressed as 90 and half *hons*. Hence it may be surmised that *kati* should have had some other significance also which we are not able to understand at present⁴⁸.

GAJABENTEKARA HON

Gajabentekara hon literally means a *hon* of elephant hunting type. *Gajabentekara* is the title of Devaraya II of Vijayanagara and his coins contain similar title with an elephant on it. This coins containing the legend *Gajabentekara* and *Gajagandabherunda*.

Hence these coins were referred to as *gajabentekara* coins by the common people. Thus this is a good example for a coin being referred to by its legend on it⁴⁹.

BELE

Bele coin is mentioned rarely in the inscriptions of the Vijayanagara period. An inscription of the time of Harihara II, dated 1382 A.D. refer to taxes to be paid to Dandanayaka Muddappa at the rate of one *bele* per *gadyana*⁵⁰. As the income is described as *suvarnadaya*, it becomes clear that *bele* was a gold coin.

RUKA

Ruka coin was quite popular in the Andhra area right from the eight century A. D. It continued to be used in the Andhra during the Vijayanagara period. An epigraph from Nellore dated 1531 A.D., refers to a gift of 90 *rukas*. Another inscription from the same place of the time of Achyutaraya, dated 1535 A. D., refers to a fine of 12 *rukas*⁵¹. A solitary reference from Bangalore in a Telugu inscription of the time of Achyutaraya refers to a local levy of one *ruka* on the occasion of the *namakarana* ceremony⁵². In the absence of more data, it is not possible to identify this coin *ruka* and its relative value. Perhaps it was a gold coin.

TARA

Silver coins are rare in Vijayanagara period. *Tara* is the only silver coin. An inscription of the time of Devaraya II dated 1424 A.D. refers to a land transaction in which *Tara* is mentioned but it does not state that it was a silver coin⁵³.

Tara coin is rarely found in inscriptions during the Vijayanagara period⁵⁴. According to some Kannada inscriptions, it was 1/16 of *pana*⁵⁵. An inscription from Anantapur district seems to suggest that *Tara* was a fraction of a *Ruka*⁵⁶. It records the gift of four *Rukas* and four *Taras* for maintaining a perpetual lamp. This inscription probably belongs to the later Vijayanagara period⁵⁷.

PANAM

Panam is referred to in some inscriptions and literary works as a copper coin. It is difficult to distinguish between the copper and gold *Panam* as found in the inscriptions. According to *ParasaraMadhaviya*, *Pana* was a copper coin⁵⁸.

A small number of records and epigraphs from Pudukottai region belonging to the Vijayanagara period mention different types of *panams*. In fact, there is a strong tradition of Viraraya *panams* throughout South India. But it has not been possible to identify this Viraraya of this tradition. However, it has been surmised that *panams* minted by Harihara II with Hanuman on the obverse and the legend *Vira Harihara* on the reverse. The records from Pudukottai also mention *gulikaipanam*, *rasi panam*, *chakra panam* and *adura panam*⁵⁹. It is difficult to understand the meaning of these terms.

An inscription from the Srikalahasti, belonging to the reign of Devaraya II dated 1435 A. D., It refers to the *panam*. Its average weight was 5.28 gms, and one *gadyana* was equal to 10 *panam*⁶⁰. Another inscription from the same place which belongs to Krishnadevaraya dated 1514 A. D., refers 1,000 *panams* donated to the temple⁶¹. Another inscription from the same temple which belonged to Achyutaraya dated 1532 A. D., refers to 4000 *panams* gifted to the temple maintenances⁶². An inscription from the same place which belonged to Achyutaraya dated 1537 A.D., refers to 440 *panam* gifted by the king to the temple⁶³. Besides, an inscription from the same place which belonged to Sadasivaraya dated 1554 A. D., refers to 100 *panams*⁶⁴.

KASU

Kasu which was widely current in Tamil country did not seem to be in much popularity in Andhra prior to the 14th century. A glossary given in the Nellore District inscriptions volume explains *kasu* as a coin of gold, silver, and copper. The copper *kasu* was about 1/20 of a penny. The term *kasu* as copper coin occurs in an inscription of the time of Achyutaraya dated 1531 A.D. It mentions the local levy as one *kasu* per load of paddy and grains⁶⁵. Another inscription from Cheruvu Belagallu in Kurnool District which belonged to the reign of Sadasivaraya 1568 A. D., gives a list of gifts made to the god Rajarajesvara in the context of which the coins Varaha and *kasu* are mentioned. However,

no details regarding to the value or metal of the coin are specified. Another inscription from the same district and belonging to the same date suggests that *kasu* is a fraction of *hana*⁶⁶.

FORIEGN TRAVELLERS

One of the important sources for the study of the coinage of the Vijayanagara period is the accounts of foreign travellers. A large number of foreign travellers visited and spent some time in various parts of the Vijayanagara kingdom and recorded impressions on a variety of aspects such as political, social, economic and religious. Some of the travellers wrote their accounts which have become valuable sources for the study of the history of Vijayanagara. As they were acquainted with the coinage and currency of the Vijayanagara period, they recorded some interesting information on them. Further, these travellers, who had handled different currencies of the world, were in a better position to evaluate about the coinage of the Vijayanagara period.

As most of the travellers were contemporaries to the Vijayanagara Empire, their testimony is all the more important and trustworthy. Most of the travellers allude in their own way to the existence of the department of mints and the techniques of minting coins during the period.

Numismatic data found in the writings of the foreign travellers, who visited Vijayanagara Empire, is highly useful for understanding the system of coinage of the period. Of the large number of travellers, Nicolo De Conti, Abdul Razzak, Duarte Barbosa, Fernao Nuniz, Ludovico di Varthema, Domingo Paes, Caesar Frederick are important. The earliest traveller to Vijayanagara was the Italian traveller Nicolo De Conti who came in 1420-1421, during the period of Devaraya I. He gave a description of the Vijayanagara court, festivities, currency and other aspects. Abdul Razzak visited Vijayanagara during the reign of Devaraya II between 1442-1443 A. D., and he was an eye witness at the *Mahanavami* festival at Hampi. His writings include the state of currency of Devaraya II and other matters of the Vijayanagara court and administration. Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna travelled in India between 1502-1508 A. D., and left behind a good and bright account of the court, city and society of Vijayanagara. Incidentally, he made many

references to Vijayanagara coins. Duarte Barbosa was a Portuguese government official and spent many years between 1500-1516 A. D., when Krishnadevaraya was the emperor. His description is very valuable for the history of Vijayanagara. Fernao Nuniz was a horse dealer and he spent three years in Vijayanagara between 1535-1537 A. D., and has left a valuable account of the empire including the coinage. Caesar Frederick visited Vijayanagara after the battle of *RakkasaTangadi* and recorded the pathetic state of affairs of that city. Most of the writings of these travellers are available in English translation. Robert Sewell edited the writings of Paes and Nuniz in his famous book '*A Forgotten Empire*'. Thus the writings of the various foreign travellers are useful in understanding the coinage of the period.

The literature available from contemporary travellers, who visited the city of Vijayanagara, informs that silver coins were also minted for circulation. It was generally believed by numismatists that Vijayanagara kings did not mint silver coins. But it has to be observed that many foreign travellers, who had travelled in Vijayanagara, had mentioned about the silver coins of this kingdom. They were being referred to as *taur*, *tar*, *tara* and *tarh*. Some inscriptions refer to them as *tara*. According to Varthema, silver *tara* was equal to one sixteenth of a gold pana. However, Abdul Razzak referred that silver coins named *Tara* were in circulation⁶⁷. Silver *taur* was equal to one fifth of a gold *pana*. This should be taken as to mean that each traveller was referring to a different silver coin of the period. The *taur* of Abdul Razzak was a bigger coin, whereas, the coin described by Varthema it was a smaller coin⁶⁸.

The term *Tara* has also been encountered in some inscriptions of an earlier date⁶⁹. The name is also mentioned in the travelogues of Ludovico di Varthema⁷⁰. Though all these travellers generally agree that *Tara* was a silver coin, there is a considerable discrepancy in their accounts, so far its value is concerned⁷¹. Varthema reported it to be in equivalence of sixteenth of *Fanam*. Such variance has led to confusion as regards the exact worth of a *Tara*. Nevertheless, it can be safely surmised that it was a small coin. It is quite possible that the two writers were referring to two different silver coins, one of which was one sixth of *pana* and the other was one sixteenth of a *pana*. This coin is not mentioned

frequently in the inscriptions. Taking the weight of the present silver coin, it may be suggested that it belongs to the first category of one sixth of a *pana*⁷².

NICOLO DE CONTI

Nicolo De Conti, (Italy) was a Venetian trading prospector and a noble who spent twenty-five years in different parts of India. He visited Cambay and from there went to Vijayanagara and gave a glowing descriptions of Vijayanagara coinage.

According to Nicolo Conti, “In the Vijayanagara kingdom, gold worked to a certain weight was used as money in the early part of the fifteenth century. In some parts, pieces of iron worked into needles and were used as currency, while in others stones called the cat’s eye were used as media of exchange”⁷³. Though he described gold coins, it is difficult to believe that Vijayanagara rulers used iron needles as coins. In fact, the needles of iron to which a reference has been made by Nicolo Conti are obviously the *Larins* minted and used by the Adilshahi rulers of Bijapur. As the Adil Shahis were the contemporaries of the Vijayanagara kings, obviously he referred to these *Larins* along with the Vijayanagara coins. However, they are made of base silver and not iron. *Larins* look like needles and on the border side is found the legend⁷⁴.

ABDUL RAZZAK

Abdul Razzak was a Timurid chronicle and Islamic scholar. He was the ambassador of Shah Rukh, the Timusid dynasty ruler of Persia. He visited Calicut in Western India in the early 1440’s. It appears as a chapter in his book *Matla-us-Sadain wa Muajma-Ul-Bahrain (The Rise of the two Oceans)*, a book of about 450 pages which contains a detailed chronicle of the history of his part of the World from 1304 to 1470 and which takes much of its contents from other writings⁷⁵.

Abdul Razzak, who visited Vijayanagara during the reign of Devaraya II, left a good account of the conditions of Vijayanagara including the currency system. He says “one might seek in vain throughout the whole of Hindustan to find a more absolute Rai (Devaraya II). The city of Vijayanagara is such has never seen a place like it in the whole world. The Jewellers sold pearls, rubies, emeralds and diamonds publicly in *bazaars*.

Abdul Razzak stated that mints were located in various parts of the empire. He states that the practice of the country was that at a stated period everyone, throughout the whole empire, carried to the mint the revenue which was due from him and whoever had money due to him from the exchequer received an order upon the mint⁷⁶.

Abdul Razzak gave a detailed account of the coins of the period of Devaraya II⁷⁷. He mentioned gold *varahas*, *partarb* or half *varaha*, quarter *varahas*, *fanam*, silver *tar* which was equal to one sixth of a *fanam* and copper *jital* equal to one third of a *tar*. The *fanam* was one tenth of a *partarb*. The *partarb* is the *pratapa* which is equal to half of a *varaha*. Further, the testimony of Abdul Razzak is also useful in identifying the coins of Devaraya II. Coins of Devaraya I and Devaraya II are so close to each other from the chronological point of view; they cannot be separated from each other with the help of palaeography. Devaraya II is known from his titles as well as from the testimony of Abdul Razzak that he had great fascination for elephant sports. Abdul Razzak states that the court of Devaraya II had more than one thousand elephants as lofty as hills and gigantic as demons. 'This has helped the numismatists to ascribe such coins which contain a portrait of an elephant on the obverse with legend Devaraya II'⁷⁸. Abdul Razzak mentioned *tar* or *taur* as silver coin and *Jital* as copper coin. No other traveller referred to any copper coin. *Jital* is valued as one third of a silver *tar*.

Devaraya's coinage included gold *varahas*, *partarb* (*pratapa*) or half *varahas*, quarter *varaha*, *fanam*, silver *tara* and copper *jitals*. One *fanam* was equal to six silver *taras* and one silver *tara* was equal to three copper *jitals*⁷⁹ and twenty *fanams* were equal to one *varaha*.

According to Abdul Razzak, one *partarb* was equal to ten *panams* and hence one *varaha* was equal to twenty *panams*⁸⁰. The Italian traveller Varthema also agrees with this statement.

Abdul Razzak states that *tara* was a silver coin which was in use during the period of Devaraya II and it was equal to one sixth of a gold *panam*'. He mentioned *jital* as a copper coin and it was one third of a silver *tar*.⁸¹

VARTHEMA

Ludivico de Varthema, the Italian traveller from the town of Bologna, left behind him, a valuable account of his experiences of Vijayanagara in the early 16th century. He is believed to have lived in between 1465-1517. He left from Venice in 1502 and travelled through Arabia, India, Central Asia, Burma and Malaysia. He made significant discoveries (especially in Arabia) and made many valuable observations of the peoples.

Varthema travelled in India during 1502-1503 A.D., and visited Goa, Calicut and Vijayanagara. His book was first published in 1510 A.D. in Rome, and was translated into Latin, German, Spanish, French⁸² etc,

Varthema added some more interesting information about the weight and fineness of the gold coins. He states that “the money changers and bankers have some weights and balance which are so small that the box in which they stand and the weights together do not weigh half an ounce; and they are so truthful and that they will turn by the weight of a hair of the head. The entire kit was so small that it could be kept in their pockets without any difficulty. And when they wish to test any piece of gold, they have carats of gold and touchstone. When the touchstone is full of gold, they have a ball of a certain composition, which resembles wax, and with this ball and when they wish to see if the gold is good or pure, they press on the touchstone and then they see in the ball the goodness of the gold and then they say; this is good and pure. And when that ball is full of gold, they melt it and take out all the gold which they have tested by the touchstone. The money changers are accurate in their business⁸³. The writing is self-explanatory and throws light on a rare aspect of the minting of the period. Head of the mint or treasury is referred to as ‘overseer’ by Vasco-da-gama⁸⁴.

Varthema stated that the *pratapa* coin was referred to as *Pardai* and he described it as having two figures stamped up on one side and certain letters on the other side. Varthema stated that *tara* was equal to one sixteenth of a *panam*. Another *tara* was one sixth of a gold *panam*⁸⁵.

DUARTE BARBOSA

Duarte Barbosa was an officer under Portuguese in Kerala between 1500-1516 A. D. and knew Malayalam very well. His account of the Vijayanagara Empire is not only authentic but also contains minute details. He returned to Portugal in 1517 A. D., and completed his work in Portuguese which was translated into English under the title *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*. According to Barbosa, to regulate the weight and fineness, goldsmiths carried a touchstone to test the fineness and purity of the gold⁸⁶.

The money changers were very honest in the business of the Vijayanagara Empire. Barbosa did not give details but simply stated that the assistance of goldsmiths, who were specially appointed for the purpose, was taken to regulate the weight and fineness of the gold coins. He also praised their honesty and proficiency. Vasco-da-gama practically echoed the opinion of Barbosa, and added that overseers sent for money changers weighed all the coins and tested their fineness with touchstones, and they were very efficient in their work and declared the value of each coin. From all these references, it becomes clear that the officers of the mint were taking special care to test the value and fineness of the coins and tried to eliminate the counterfeit coins. It becomes clear from the statement of Barbosa that the coins of this place were perfectly genuine; not one of them had ever been found false nor is found false now⁸⁷.

Barbosa referred to the fineness of the gold coins. He stated that the gold used for the coins was base. But the Chinese travellers made it clear that the gold *panam* was pure up to nine tenths.

Barbosa gave some more details about the *pardao* (*pratapa*) coin. "The gold coin which they call *pardao* is minted in certain towns of the kingdom of the Vijayanagara. It was round and made in a mould which are current over the whole of the country⁸⁸. Though it is not known as to how many mints were operating in the Vijayanagara kingdom, it is known from epigraphic and literary references that Gandikota, Tirupati, Adoni, Penukonda, Mangalore, Barakuru, Gutti, Nellore, Madurai had mints. To regulate the weight and fineness of the gold coin the help of the goldsmiths, who were specially appointed for the purpose, was sought. The gold is rather base. The coin is round in form

and is made with a die. Some of them have on one side Indian letters and on the other two figures”. Barbosa considered *pardao* as equal to 320 *reis*⁸⁹ (Old Portuguese money of account of very small value)

As Harihara II introduced administrative reforms it became necessary for the people to pay the taxes in cash and not in kind. This gave great impetus to the minting of the coins. With the increase of the number of mints, a great administrative control was imposed on mints which regulated the coinage of the period and a separate department of mints was established under the Vijayanagara rulers. There was a central mint under which operated smaller mints located at different parts of the empire. This practice became popular in the Vijayanagara period. Mangaluru *gadyana*, Barakuru *gadyana* were the coins minted at Mangaluru and Barakuru respectively. To meet the needs of the vast kingdom and also to give the impression of decentralisation of power, the Vijayanagara rulers had given some selected feudatories the privilege of minting their own coins. The coins of Lakkanna Dandanayaka, a feudatory under Devaraya II, are a good example of this practice. Local bodies also minted coins which were used in the areas under their control.

Barbosa referred to the fineness of the gold coins. He made it clear that the gold used for the coins was base. But the Chinese evidence makes it clear that the panam of the period was pure up to nine tenths. This is not base at all. In this connection, it is worth referring to certain coin terms which occur in the Vijayanagara inscriptions. They are *ghattivara*, *nijaghatti varaha* and *suddha varaha*. It is difficult to understand the precise meaning of these terms. The first term *ghatti varaha* literally means ‘*solidvaraha*’. Even today to describe the pure gold, presently we use the expression ‘solid gold’. On this analogy, it is stated that *ghatti varaha* was a *varaha* coin in which the gold content was rather of high percentage of quality of fineness. The word literally means ‘truly’ but, in Kannada usage it is intended to convey the meaning of ‘assertion of a fact’. As if it was not enough to describe a coin as of high quality gold, the expression truly has been added to dispel any doubt regarding the fineness of the gold. In other words the expression *nijaghatti varaha* may be taken to mean ‘positively pure gold varaha’. The third expression *suddha varaha* literally means ‘pure gold *varahas*’.⁹⁰

Barbosa's description of the Vijayanagara coin can easily be compared to an actual specimen discovered. According to him, one side contained a man and woman and other side had Indian letters. Coins of Harihara II had Siva and Parvati on the obverse and the Nagari legend Sri Pratapa Harihara on the reverse. Another coin of the same ruler showed Brahma and Sarasvati on the obverse and the Nagari legend on the reverse. The same king's another type had Lakshmi and Narayana on the obverse and Nagari legend on the reverse. The above first type was issued by Devaraya I, Devaraya II, Krishnadevaraya, Sadasivaraya and Tirumalaraya. The second type was issued by Harihara II alone. The third type was issued by Harihara II, Devaraya, Sadasivaraya and Tirumalaraya. The last named ruler issued coins with Sri Rama and Sita on the obverse and the Nagari legend on the reverse. Thus, all the above types contained a man (god) and a woman (goddess) on one side (obverse) and Indian letters (Nagari legend) on the other (reverse). Hence Barbosa could have referred to any of the four types of coins issued by any of the rulers listed above. Barbosa is known to have stayed in India from 1500 to 1516 A. D. and it was the period when Narasanayaka, Narasimha and Krishnadevaraya were ruling. Hence Barbosa could have seen either the old coins of Harihara II, Devaraya I, Devaraya II or the current coins of Krishnadevaraya. Hence the description of Barbosa tallies with the coins of these rulers and not those of later rulers of the Aravidu dynasty.

Barbosa gave the information about the monthly salary of soldier 4-5 *pardaos*. Barbosa says "coins of the Vijayanagara Empire neither are perfectly genuine; not one of them has been ever found false nor is now found so"⁹¹.

DOMINGO PAES

Domingo Paes the Portuguese traveller visited Vijayanagara during 1520-1522 A. D. The chronicles of Domingo Paes have become famous because of the translation rendered by Robert Sewell who brought a titled *A Forgotten Empire*. He writes that if any one does not know what a *pardao* is, let him know that it is a round gold coin, which is not struck anywhere in India except in this kingdom'. He further adds that 'it bears impressed on it on one side two images and on the other the name of the king who commanded it to be struck; those which this king ordered to be struck have only one image'. Commenting

on the circulation of coins and their value, he mentions that ‘This coin is current all over India. Each *pardao* is worth of 360 reis’⁹².

Domingo Paes referred to gold *pratapa* coin and that too outside the Vijayanagara kingdom. Evidently, that, gold coins of Vijayanagara were honoured throughout the country. Within the territories of separate governors, as they were allowed to mint copper coins, there were localised coins and were not honoured outside the territory of a particular governor. However, the royal coins minted at the central mint, on the orders of the Vijayanagara kings, were accepted and honoured everywhere because of the correct weight and gold content. This explains the divergent views of the travellers in a satisfactory way⁹³.

The Vijayanagara was the only important and powerful Hindu kingdom which struck the round gold coins as different from the Sultans and Mughals who minted square and other types of coins. This must have been responsible for the statement of Domingo Paes that *pardaos* were minted only by Vijayanagara rulers. The Vijayanagara gold coins generally contain legends on one side and the figures on the other. Regarding the latter, travellers differentiate a coin with one figure and coins with two figures. The coins with one figure had impression of Hanuman, Garuda, Nandi, Balakrishna, Elephant, Boar, Lion etc. The coins with two figures had images of Siva-Parvati, Brahma-Saraswati, Lakshmi-Narasimha etc. Thus their description correctly tallies with the known specimens. The other gold coin to which a reference had been made by some of the travellers is *panam* or *fanam*. *Pagoda* is also mentioned by some writers. According to Domingo Paes a *pardao* was equal to 360 *Reis*. He says the annual salary of a military officer of the high rank ranged between 600 and 1000 *pardaos*. He states that “there are men of the guard who have a thousand *pardao* pay per year and others 800 and still others 600 and more”⁹⁴.

NUNIZ

Nuniz was in Vijayanagara in 1535 and also visited a second time later. The chronicles of Nuniz have become popular because of the translation of his work done by Sewell in his book *A Forgotten Empire*.

Fernao Nuniz states that ‘On the death of the king Bukkaraya, there came to the throne his son Pratapa Devaraya, which in Kannada means powerful Lord, and he coined a

money of *pardao Deorao* and from that time onwards it has become a custom to call coins by the name of the kings who made them; and it is because of this that there are so many names of the *pardaos* in the kingdom of Vijayanagara, This statement makes it clear that the practice of naming the coins by the name of the issuer started from the time of Devaraya II and this practice became popular among the successive kings of this dynasty.

This is confirmed by a Kannada work of a later date which refers to *Krishnarayi* and *Acchyutarayi* as the coins issued Krishnadevaraya and Acchyutaraya respectively. An epigraph also refers to *Acchyutaraya hana* meaning a coin minted by king Achyutaraya⁹⁵. Nuniz states that the price of 5 horses was a 1000 *pardaos*⁹⁶.

The word pagoda used by some of these travellers is of some interest. The word refers to a religious structure akin to a pyramid to idols worshiped in temples; even a single coin of Vijayanagara period has a *gopura* or a *sikhara* on it. By extended meaning, it also connotes an idol meant for worship and hence the travellers might have used this word to connote the idols that are found on these coins. In fact there is no Vijayanagara coin which has no religious symbol or significance attached to it. Almost all the coins have gods and goddesses and religious symbols embossed on them. Hence the travellers who saw these coins were justifiably using the expression *pagoda*⁹⁷.

CAESER FREDERICK

Caeser Frederick had a different experience with regard to the coinage of the Vijayanagara period. He states “a new governor’s territory, as every day did, although they were all the tributaries to the kings of Vijayanagara, yet every one of them stamped a small coin of copper so that the money took this day would not serve the next day”. In this description, Caeser Frederick is referring first to copper coins and secondly to territories of different governors within the Vijayanagara empire⁹⁸.

Abdul Razzak has made a reference to *varahas* or *gadyana*, the most popular gold coin of the Vijayanagara period. No other travellers were not referred these coin. On the contrary, most of the travellers refer to *pratapa* in various forms such as *partarb*, *pardao*, *pardai* etc. It is known that this was specially coined by Harihara II and it continued during the period of his successors also. Thus *pratapa* was a distinctive coin of the period. Even

when referring to the revenue of the villages and the salary of the officers, the coin *pratapa* is used by the travellers. From all these references it can be suggested that *pratapa* was, perhaps, the most popular coin used in various transactions and naturally attracted the attention of almost all the travellers⁹⁹.

From the data of the travellers, the following table coins can be reconstructed

1 *varaha* = 2 *partarb* or *pardao* (*pratapa*)

1 *pardao* = half *varahas*

1 quarter *varaha* 1 *panam* (*fanam*) = 1/10 of *pardao*

1 *tar* = 1/6 *fanam*

1 *tar* = 1/16 *fanam*

1 *taurh* = 1/15 *fanam*

1 *jital* = 1/3 *tar*.

Other coin and denominations are not referred to by travellers for which one has to depend upon epigraphs of the period.

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Chapter - V

The foundation of Vijayanagara Empire is an epoch-making event in South Indian history. South India witnessed great heights in political and cultural fields which it had not witnessed earlier and hence it is referred to as the golden age of south Indian history. This appellation can easily be justified on the basis of the rich variety of gold coins which were issued by the kings of this dynasty. Majority of the historians have agreed that the aim and purpose of the foundation of this empire was to bring back the glory of the *Hinduism* and *Hindu dharma*.

During the Vijayanagara period, sage Vidyaranya revived the lost glory of the Vedic and *Puranic* religion which suffered a lot, almost to the point of extinction, as a result of repeated Muslim invasions over the southern kingdoms. As the *guru* or teacher of the Sangama brothers Harihara I and Bukkaraya I, he inspired them to establish a new kingdom first at Anagondi and later at Vijayanagara in 1336 A. D., In a short period it grew into a mighty Empire, which lasted more than three centuries under the patronage of great rulers, viz. two Harihararayas, two Bukkarayas, two Devarayas, two Narasimharayas, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutadevaraya, Sadasivaraya, Venkatapatiraya and others. The *VedicPuranic* religion flourished in all its aspects and *Vedic* studies, rituals, art, architecture, regional languages, literature, fine arts, ayurveda, the philosophical ponderings as contemplated by the sage Vidyaranya all thrived. Vidyaranya initiated a great project for writing the *bhashyas* (commentaries) on the four *Vedas*, viz., the *Rigveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Samaveda* and *Atharvanaveda*.

The religious conditions of the period were such that it gave an opportunity for all religions to thrive on their own accord without hindering the promotions of other religions. *Saivism* and *Vaishnavism*, the two major religions of south India which had uneasy relations in the earlier period, now flourished side by side. Grants to *Saiva* and *Vaishnava* temples were given alike. Some rulers were more inclined towards *Virasaivism* of Basavanna. We do not hear of any quarrels between the followers of this faith and other. The only religious misunderstanding during this period was between *Jainas* and *Srivaishnavas* but it was amicably settled by Bukkaraya I.

Another important factor was the harmonious development of the three schools of *Vedanta*, viz. *Advaita*, *Dvaita* and *Visistadvaita* during the period. Vidyaranya of the *Advaitamatha* of Sringeri, Madhvacharya of *Dvaitamatha* and Vedanta Desika of the *Visistadvaita* received equal respect and regard from Vijayanagara rulers though Vidyaranya was the spiritual leader of the foundation of the Vijayanagara Empire. Tolerance of different schools of spirituals thoughts was reflected in the coinage of the period.

Coins are one of the main sources to know the history of mankind. To avoid the inconvenience of barter system, coins emerged all over India. The earliest coins in India were the Punch marked coins. Generally, these coins are dated from 6th century B.C. to 5th Century B.C. which was issued with natural symbols. After the Punch marked coins, a visible change occurred during the time of Indo-Greeks, as the coins were marked with portrait symbols. Later, indigenous rulers started issuing their coins with inscription primarily written in Brahmi script. During the time of Guptas, issuance of the coins reached its zenith. This tradition was followed by the succeeding dynasties like Cholas, Kakatiyas, and Hoyasalas etc. Coinage of India was primarily marked by pictorial devices either in the form of gods and goddesses, natural figures and the inscriptions on coins is rarely found. But in the medieval period, a great change took place, discarding the pictorial devices on the coins and a new language (Arabic) was introduced on the coins and this tradition gradually developed in North India. Finally it spread to almost all the parts of the country and it is known as Islamic tradition.

The emergence of the Vijayanagara Empire heralded a new phase in the development of the coinage and currency system in the history of South India. The Vijayanagara period witnessed important changes. They continued the old tradition of India, where pictorial devices became the major feature of the coinage. Earlier coinage had Brahmi, Kharosti, Devanagari and Arabic scripts. But Vijayanagara coins contain legends in three scripts i.e., Devanagari, Kannada and Telugu. The richness of gold coins, the innumerable types of gold and copper coins, the rich variety of symbols, the diversity of gods and goddesses, appropriate legends in various scripts and the technical superiority of the coins deserve special attention. No doubt South India had a well-established coinage tradition by the time

the Vijayanagara Empire was born but, the sudden developments were noticed during the period which gave the coinage of the period a unique place. Harihara I and Bukkaraya I, the originators of the Vijayanagara kingdom, had the coinage of the Hoyasalas, Kakatiyas and the later Pandyas for their model. Naturally, Harihara I and Bukkaraya I derived great inspiration from the Hoyasala coins which indicated religious significance and purpose so close to the hearts of the founders of Vijayanagara. Even the names of the coins of the Hoyasalas such as *gadyana*, *pana*, *haga*, *visa*, *bele* were literally lifted by the Vijayanagara rulers.

The Vijayanagara monarch had a separate department in charge of minting of coins. The main mint was located in Hampi. The Vijayanagara kings issued a large number of coins in gold, silver and copper. However, the silver currency is rare. Most of them embossed the images of gods and goddesses, animals, birds, state emblem etc. Special coins were made in commemoration of occasions like triumphs over other kingdoms. The names of the gold coins were *gadyana*, *varaha*, *mada*, *pratapa*, *kati*, *ponnu*, *haga* and *pana*. Silver coins are called *tara*, and the copper coins were called *jital* or *kasu*. On the reverse side most of the coins king's name was inscribed. The Saluva rulers did not issue any type of coins, because of little span of their rule but the remaining Vijayanagara rulers issued a vast and varied number of coins.

During the Vijayanagara period significant changes accrued in the fortunes of *Saiva* sects. Bhikshavrithi *matha* was the sole institution which influenced the rulers of Karnataka and Andhra. The inscriptions from A. D., 1320 onward at Vutukuru, Tripuranthakam, Basireddi Palli, Pushpagiri, Rayalacheruvu and Pedda Mudiyam etc.(A. D. 1551) refers to the dominance of Virasaivas. These inscriptions refer to the Acharyas, Shaddarsana Sthapanacharya Virasaiva Siddha Bhikshavrithi ayyavaru at Vutukuru, and Aghorasivacharya Ayyavaru at Somireddi Palli (A. D. 1403). The kingdoms of Gutti and Gandikota were principal areas of influence. *Saivism* reflected on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers, i.e., Siva Parvathi, Bull and *Damaruga* symbols are found on the coins.

It is not definitely known when the *Vaishnava* religion began to be followed by the Vijayanagara royals. According to the *prapannamritam* of Ananthacharya, a celebrated *Vaishnava* work, king Virupaksha was the first Vijayanagara ruler who embraced to Vaishnavism. Though his predecessors were staunch followers of *Saivism* they followed a policy of religious tolerance towards *Vaishnavism*.

A study of the Vijayanagara coins reveals the prominence given by the Vijayanagara rulers to incarnations of Vishnu. The various incarnations of Lord Vishnu found portrayed on the coins include the *Ramatankas* of Sri Rama. Krishna had a special fascination for the Vijayanagara rulers. He was depicted on the Vijayanagara coins in the form of Balakrishna, Venkateswara of Tirupati, the Lord of Seven Hills, had a large number of kings as his devotees, among whom the Vijayanagara kings lead. The depiction of Lord Venkateswara on Krishnadevaraya's coins is identical in appearance to the most popular god worshipped throughout the length and breadth of India.

From the artistic and technical point of view, the Vijayanagara coins show a great improvement. The art of preparing the correct mould and minting the coin is easily seen, particularly in the gold coins. Legends are very clearly seen and the details of the gods and goddesses are also clear. Generally care was taken to mint all the emblems and the legend within the flan. Another interesting feature of the Vijayanagara coins that attracts attention is the variety of legends. These legends are in three scripts, namely Kannada, Nagari and Telugu. It is of interest to note that the very first king Harihara I introduced Kannada and Nagari legends on his coins. Later rulers used Kannada and Nagari on their coins while only at the fag of the dynasty they used Telugu script. To be very precise, three rulers minted coins with Kannada legends; three rulers had Kannada and Nagari; six rulers had only Nagari and two rulers had only Telugu legends.

The legends generally included the name of the issuer or some of his titles. Harihara I and Bukkaraya I used the word '*Vira*' along with their names but from the time of Harihara II, the simple adjectives was removed and was replaced by a more prestigious word '*Pratapa*'. The legends are generally written in two or three lines, at times with horizontal lines separating each line of the legend.

Kannada and Nagari script was inscribed on the coins of Harihara I, Bukkaraya I, Harihara II, Devaraya I, Devaraya II, Mallikarjuna, Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya, Sadasivaraya, Ramaraya, Tirumalaraya, Sri Rangaraya I, Venkatapthiraya I, Sri Rangaraya III. Bukkaraya II and Vira Narasimha. Vijayaraya I, Vijayaraya II and Ramaraya Venkatadri issued coins in Kannada script. Krishnadevaraya and Sri Rangaraya I both rulers were inscribed coins in Kannada, Nagari and Telugu scripts. Sri Rangaraya II and Venkatapathiraya II both rulers were issued coins in Telugu script only.

The structure of the Vijayanagara currency irrespective of the metal used for coinage was standardized. Most characteristic feature of the Vijayanagara coins is that they are all round in shape and have an image of deity or deities or animals on the obverse. The reverse is divided by lines into two or three lines with name of the king in abbreviated form. King's name is preceded by word '*Pratapa*' or '*Vira*' and ends with '*Raya*'. This distinctive feature of Vijayanagara coins has been maintained in their coins by kings right from Sangama dynasty to the Aravidu and they seemed to have followed Hoyasala pattern in the design of their coins. Kannada was used on the coins of first two rulers of the dynasty and then came *Devanagari* script. Telugu appeared first on Krishnadevaraya coins and was commonly used on the coins of Aravidu kings who's capital was in the heart of Andhra country. But during the territorial expansion in the south Vijayanagara rulers persisted with the coinage of previous rulers with their initials. For example when they annexed Chola territories the common Chola coin of the bull was on the obverse and the reverse had an image of a man. Vijayanagara rulers continued the same type of bull coins in the Chola territories with the addition of kings initial such as 'Ha' for Harihara. They did the same for Venad, Alupa and other regions also.

The Vijayanagara rulers started with the simple title '*Vira*' along with their personal names as in the case of Harihara I and Bukkaraya I. Harihara II perhaps to distinguish his own coins from those of his predecessor Hairihara II introduced a more honorific title '*Pratapa*' on his coins and this practice became quite popular with almost all the kings of the dynasty. The kings Harihara II, Devaraya I, Devaraya II, Sri Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya, and Sadasivaraya used the title '*Pratapa*' along with their personal names. The title *pratapa* is very helpful in distinguishing the coins of

Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagara and Krishnaraja Wodeyar of Mysore; Sadasivaraya of Vijayanagara and Sadasiva Nayakas of Keladi. The absence of the title 'Pratapa' on the coins of Nayakas and Wodeyars is the only identifying clue in this regard.

The titles of the kings had become so famous that the people could recognize the kings on the basis of their titles. Naturally, such kings took pride in these titles and used them on their coins in place of personal names. In the case of Devaraya II was a great enthusiast and expert in elephant sports and his titles *Rayagajagandaberunda* and *Gajabetakara* had become famous. Even foreign travellers refer to them. Hence for some of his copper coins, he used only these titles and not his personal name.

Another interesting factor with regard to Vijayanagara rulers is that during their territorial expansion they respected the previous rulers pattern of coins as said above and naturally population of those areas readily accepted their coinage.

The epigraphs of the Vijayanagara period are written in four languages viz. Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu and Tamil. These epigraphs contain very valuable information on various aspects of the Vijayanagara coins and currency system.

The epigraphs of the Vijayanagara period furnish most important and descriptive information about the varieties of coins. Coins are distinguished on the basis of the mints, symbols, metals, and their values. The names of the coins like *Gadyana*, *Varaha gadyana*, *Dodda gadyana*, *Pratapa gadyana*, *Kati gadyana*, *Rekha gadyana*, *Rekha gatti varaha gadyana*, *Kathari ankusha gadyana*, *Kula gadyana*, *Hittuvali gadyana*, *Samudaya gadyana*, *Dodda varaha*, *Ghatti varaha*, *Sudda varaha*, *Chakra varaha*, *Hanumantharaya varaha*, *Venkatapatiraya varaha*, *Gandikota varaha*, *Sanna pratapa*, *Mada*, *Pana*, *Honnu*, *Hana*, *Kati honnu*, *Gajabentakara hon*, *Bele*, *Ruka*, *Tara*, *Panam* and *Kasu* etc., are furnished by the inscriptions and literary works. The *gadyana* was the most popular coin of the Vijayanagara period.

Naming the coins after the mint place was also followed during the Vijayanagara period. Coins were named after the mints located at Barakuru, Mangaluru, Tirupati, Adoni, Tadipatri, Gutti, Nellore and Madurai. Barakuru and Mangaluru which were the provincial capitals of Tulu Nadu during Vijayanagara period. The *gadyanas* that were minted are

referred to as Barakuru *gadyana* and Mangaluru *gadyana* respectively. Adoni (Adavani) and Tadipatri had mints where the gold *honnu* was minted and is known by a Kannada work *Manaumiya chaupada*. *Hons* minted at Gutti called Gutti *honnu* is known from the same work. Some coins bear the letters *Ne* and *Ma* on the obverse and they are presumed to represent Nellore and Madurai which were important places during the Vijayanagara period.

One of the important sources for the study of the coinage of the Vijayanagara period is the accounts of foreign travellers. A large number of foreign travellers visited and spent some time in various parts of the Vijayanagara kingdom and recorded impressions on a variety of aspects such as political, social, economic and religious. Some of the travellers wrote their accounts which have become valuable sources for the study of the history of Vijayanagara. As they were acquainted with the coinage and currency of the Vijayanagara period, they recorded some interesting information on them.

Numismatic data found in the writings of the foreign travellers, who visited Vijayanagara Empire, is highly useful for understanding the system of coinage of the period. Of the large number of travellers, Nicolo De Conti, Abdul Razzak, Duarte Barbosa, Fernao Nuniz, Ludovico di Varthema, Domingo Paes, Caesar Frederick are important.

Foreign travellers, who had travelled in Vijayanagara, had mentioned about the silver coins of this kingdom. They were being referred to as *taur*, *tar*, *tara* and *tarh*. Some inscriptions refer to them as *tara*. According to Varthema, silver *tara* was equal to one sixteenth of a gold *pana*. However, Abdul Razzak referred that silver coins named *Tara* were in circulation. Silver *taur* was equal to one fifth of a gold *pana*. This should be taken as to mean that each traveller was referring to a different silver coin of the period. The *taur* of Abdul Razzak was a bigger coin, whereas, the coin described by Varthema it was a smaller coin.

The Vijayanagara was the only important and powerful Hindu kingdom which struck the round gold coins as different from the Sultans and Mughals who minted square and other types of coins. This must have been responsible for the statement of Domingo Paes that *pardaos* were minted only by Vijayanagara rulers. The Vijayanagara gold coins

generally contain legends on one side and the figures on the other. Regarding the latter, travellers differentiate a coin with one figure and coins with two figures. The coins with one figure had impression of Hanuman, Garuda, Nandi, Balakrishna, Elephant, Boar, Lion etc. The coins with two figures had images of Siva-Parvati, Brahma-Saraswati, Lakshmi-Narasimha etc. Thus their description correctly tallies with the known specimens. The other gold coin to which a reference had been made by some of the travellers is *panam* or *fanam*. *Pagoda* is also mentioned by some writers. According to Domingo Paes a *pardao* was equal to 360 *Reis*. He says the annual salary of a military officer of the high rank ranged between 600 and 1000 *pardaos*. He states that “there are men of the guard who have a thousand *pardao* pay per year and others 800 and still others 600 and more”. The Vijayanagara rulers had a well organized system of coinage as testified by the contemporary travellers.

Vijayanagara kings utilized the coins effectively for the revival of Hindu religion and culture, which faced the threat of extinction. Every Vijayanagara coin had an image of Hindu deity or the image of an animal which Hindus worship on the obverse side. The reverse of the coin has the name of the king in Kannada, Nagari or Telugu language. Even today the Vijayanagara coins are found in plenty since no one would melt or destroy a coin with the image of a Hindu god or goddess. In those days coins were the main source of communication among the masses and Vijayanagara rulers effectively used coins for revival of *Hinduism*.

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GLOSSARY

Abhaya mudra: A hand pose to convey protection or assurance. In this, the palm of the hand is fully open and the fingers point upwards. The palm faces the onlookers.

Airavata : The name of the elephant, that serves as the vehicle of Indra, the king of gods.

Anjali mudra : A hand pose in which the palms of the hands are kept close to each other and the folded hands are made to rest on the chest.

Asana : The word in Sanskrit may mean a seat or a attitude.

Ayudha : Weapon

Bana : Arrow

Chakra : Wheel or Disc. It is characteristic symbol of Hindu god, Vishnu or his incarnations and the goddess Durga.

Damaru : Small drum such is as carried by the Hindu god Siva.

Dhyana mudra : Same as *yoga mudra*.

Garuda : Eagle, vehicle of Vishnu

Katihasta : A hand pose in which “the arm is set down so as to hang by the side of the body, and the hand is made to rest on the lion, indicating thus a posture of ease”.

Khadga : Sword

Kurma : Tortoise.

<i>Makara torana</i>	: A decorative motif with <i>makara</i> at either end supporting the garland. It is either arched or straight. It occurs either at the apex of a niche or on the door lintel or on the gateway lintel.
<i>Mriga</i>	: Deer or black buck.
<i>Mudra</i>	: Hand pose.
<i>Nandi</i>	: Bull, Siva's mount.
<i>Padmasana</i>	: Lotus seat.
<i>Parasu</i>	: Battle axe.
<i>Pitha</i>	: Pedestal.
<i>Sankha</i>	: Conch shell.
<i>Sukhasana</i>	: A sitting posture in which one leg, generally the left one folded, rests flat on the seat while the right leg is either hanging down the seat, or the right knee is raised upwards and the right arm is stretched out on the raised knee.
<i>Trisula</i>	: The trident of Siva.
<i>Varada mudra</i>	: A hand pose of boon giving. In this the palm facing the onlooker keeps the fingers pointing downwards.
<i>Vina</i>	: A musical instrument.
<i>Virasana</i>	: Sitting with the left leg bent at the knee and resting on the seat and the right leg hanging.

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EI : Epigraphia Indica
EA : Epigraphic Andhrica
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TABLES

VIJAYANAGARA COINS

HANUMAN TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1	Harihara I	Sangama	Sri Vi/rahari/hara	Gold	Kannada	
			Sri Vi/rahari/hara	Silver	Kannada	
			1. Ha 2. Hari/hara	Copper ---do--	Kannada ----do---	
2.	Bukkaraya I	Sangama	Sri Vi/ra Bukka/raya	Gold	Kannada	
			Bu	Silver	Kannada	
			Vira Bu/kapati/raya	Copper	Nagari	
3	Harihara II	Sangama	Sri Vira/Pratapa Ha/ ri hara	Gold	Kannada	
4	Devaraya I	Sangama	Da	Silver	Nagari	
5	Venkatapatiraya I	Tuluva	Sri (venka?)/taraya	Copper	Nagari	
6	Srirangaraya I	Aravidu	Sri/Ranga	Copper	Kannada	
7	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Sri vem/katapatira/yaru	Copper	Nagari	
8	Venkatapatiraya III	Aravidu	1. Ramaraja/Tirumala/Venkata	Copper	Kannada	
			2. Sri/Ramaraja/timmaraja/Venkata	Copper	Nagari and Kannada	

VISHNU TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Harihara I	Sangama	Hari/hara	Copper	Nagari	
2.	Krishnadevaraya	Tuluva	1.Sri/pratapa/krishnaraya 2. Sri Krishna/raya	Copper Copper	Nagari Kannada	
3	Venkatapatiraya I	Tuluva	Not clear		Kannada	
4.	Sri Rangaraya I	Aravidu	1. Ranga/raya 2. (Vi)ra ran/garaya 3. Vira/ranga/raya	Copper copper copper	Telugu Kannada Nagari	
5.	Srirangaraya III	Aravidu	1. Sri Ranga.	Copper	Kannada	

SIVA PARVATHI TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Harihara II	Sangama	Sri Pra/tapa Hari/Hara Sri Pratha/Pa Hari/Hara Hari/Hara	Gold Silver Copper	Nagari Nagari Kannada	
2	Devaraya I	Sangama	Sri Pra/tapa deva/raya Sri Pra/tapa deva/raya	Gold Silver	Nagari Nagari	
3	Devaraya II	Sangama	Sri Pra/tapa deva/raya	Copper	Kannada	
4	krishnadevaraya	Tuluva	Sri/Krishnara/ya	Gold	Nagari	
5	Sadasivaraya	Tuluva	Sri Pra/tapa Sadasiva/raya	Gold	Nagari	

LAKSHMI NARAYANA TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Harihara II	Sangama	Sri pra/tapa Hari/hara	Gold	Nagari	
2.	Devaraya I	Sangama	Sri pra/tapa Deva/raya	Gold	Nagari	
3.	Ramachandra	Tuluva	Sri pra/tapa Rama/chandra	Gold	Nagari	
4.	Sadasivaraya	Tuluva	1. Sri/pratapa/sadasiva 2. Sri/Pratapa/sadasivaraya	Gold Copper	Nagari Nagari	
5	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Sri/Venkata/raya	Copper	Nagari kannada	

BRAHMA – SARASWATI TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Harihara II	Sangama	Sri pra/tapa Hari/hara	Gold	Nagari	

LAKSHMI NARASIMHA TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1	Harihara II	Sangama	Sri pra/thapa hari/hara	Gold	Nagari	
2.	Viranarasimha	Tuluva	Nara/simha	copper	Nagari	
3.	Sadasivaraya	Tuluva	Sriprata/pa sadasiva/raya	copper	Nagari	
4.	Ramadevaraya	Tuluva	Ra/ma	Copper	Nagari	
5.	Srirangaraya III	Aravidu	Sri/ramga	Copper	Kannada	

LAKSHMI TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Harihara I	Sangama	Sri/Harihara	Copper	Nagari	
2.	Harihara II	Sangama	Sripura/tapa hari/hara	Gold	Nagari	
3.	Krishnadevaraya	Tuluva	Sri/pratapa Krishna/raya	Gold	Nagari	
4.	Tirumalaraya	Aravidu	Sri Ti/rumala/raya	Copper	Nagari	

SARASWATI TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Krishnadevaraya	Tuluva	Pratapa/krshna/raya	Gold	Kannada	

VENKATESWARA TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Krishnadevaraya	Tuluva	Sri/Harihara	Copper	Nagari	
2.	Alia Ramaraya	Tuluva	Sri/Pratapa Krishna/raya Sri/Rama/raya	Gold Copper	Nagari Nagari and Kannada	
3.	Venkatapatiraya I	Tuluva	Venkata/raya Chalama/Venkata/Raya	Gold Gold	Nagari Nagari	

4.	Srirangaraya I	Aravidu	Sri/ra(n)/gara/ya	Gold	Nagari	
5.	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Vira/venkata/Raya Venka/rappa	Gold Copper	Nagari Kannada	
6.	Venkatapatiraya III	Aravidu		Gold		Blank
7.	Srirangaraya III	Aravidu	Sri Venka/teswara/yanamah	Gold	Nagari	

BALAKRISHNA TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Krishnadevaraya	Tuluva	Sri Pra/tapa Krishna/raya	Gold	Nagari	
2.	Srirangaraya I	Aravidu	Raya/raya	Copper	Telugu	
3.	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Venka/tappa	Copper	Kannada	

SRI RAMA- SITA-LAKSHMANA TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Tirumalaraya I	Aravidu	Sri Ti/rumala ra/yalu	Gold	Nagari	

VAISHNAVITE SYMBOLS

SANKHA – CHAKRA TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Tirumalaraya I	Aravidu	Cha/lama/raya	Copper	Nagari	
2.	Ramadevaraya	Aravidu	Ra/ma	Copper	Nagari	
3.	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Ve Vem	Copper Copper	Kannada Kannada	First letter of Venkatapatiraya II

PARABOLA TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Srirangaraya I	Aravidu	(Vi) ra ram/ga raya	Copper	Kannada	
2.	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Vem Ve	Copper Copper	Kannada Kannada	First letter of Venkatapatiraya II

BOW AND ARROW TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Ve	Copper	Kannada	First letter of Venkatapatiraya II

DAGGER TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Tirumalaraya I	Aravidu	Sri Ti/rumala/raya	Copper	Nagari	

DAMARUGA TYPE (SAIVITE)

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Ve	Copper	Kannada	First letter of Venkatapatiraya II

HILL TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Venkatapatira II	Aravidu	Ve	Copper	Kannada	First letter of Venkatapatiraya II
2.	Srirangaraya III	Aravidu	Sri Ranga/raya	Copper	Kannada	

ANIMAL MOTIFS**TIGER TYPE**

S. No	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1	Hari Hara I	Sangama	Hari/hara	Copper	Kannada	

LION TYPE

S. No	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1	Hari Hara I	Sangama	Hari/hara	Copper	Kannada	
2.	Devaraya II	Sangama	Sri Deva/ raya	Silver	Nagari	
3.	Sadasivaraya	Tuluva	Sri Sa/ da siva/ raya	Copper	Nagari	

ELEPHANT TYPE

S. No	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Devaraya II	Sangama	Sri Deva/ raya	Gold	Nagari	
			Deva/ raya	Silver	Nagari	
			Raya ga/jagamde/be/ rumda	Copper	Nagari	
2.	Vira Narasimha	Sangama	Vira/ Narasimgha	Gold	Kannada	
3	Vijayaraya II	Sangama	Vija /ya raya	Copper	Kannada	
4	Mallikarjuna	Sangama	1. Yima/di deva/raya	Silver	Kannada	
			2. Malli/karjuna ra/ yaru	Copper	Kannada	
5	Krishnadevaraya	Tuluva	Sripratapa/Krishna/raya	Copper	Nagari	
6	Achyutaraya	Tuluva	Sri Prata/pachyuta/raya	Copper	Nagari	
7	Sadasivaraya	Tuluva	Sada/ siva	Copper	Nagari	
8	Tirumalaraya I	Aravidu	Sri cha/lama/raya	Silver	Nagari	
			Sri cha/lama/raya	Copper	Nagari	

HORSE TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1	Achyutaraya	Tuluva	Sri Pra/tapachyuta/raya	Gold	Nagari	
2	Sadasivaraya	Tuluva	Sada/ maha	Copper	Nagari	
3	Sri Rangaraya III	Aravidu	Sri / ramga	Copper	Kannada	

VARAHA TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1	Achyutaraya	Tuluva	taraya/achu	Copper	Kannada	
2	Tirumalraya I	Tuluva	Sri Ti/rumala/raya Sri Ti/rumala/raya	Copper Copper	Nagari Kannada	
3	Sri Rangaraya III	Aravidu	Sri / ranga	Copper	Kannada	

FISH TYPE

S. No	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1	Hari Hara II	Sangama	Sri/Pandya/dhanumjaya	Gold	Nagari	Pandyan style
2	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Ve	Copper	Kannada	First letter of Venkatapatiraya II

PEACOCK TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1	Sri Rangaraya I	Aravidu	Sriran/garaya	Copper	Nagari	
2	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Ve	Copper	Kannada	First letter of Venkatapatiraya II
3	Sri Rangaraya III	Aravidu	Sri / ranga	Copper	Kannada	

CAMEL TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1	Sri Rangaraya III	Aravidu	Sri/ranga	Copper	Kannada	

BULL TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Harihara I	Sangama	Ha Sri Hari/Hara	Copper Copper	Kannada Nagari	
2.	Bukkaraya I	Sangama	Bu	Copper	Kannada	
3.	Harihara II	Sangama	Pratapa/Harihara	Copper	Nagari	
4.	Bukkaraya II	Sangama	Vija/ya Bukka/raya	Copper	Nagari	

5.	Devaraya I	Sangama	Sri Deva/ raya A dagger between Sankha and Chakra Sri/Nilaka(m)/ta Sri Deva/raya	Copper Copper Copper	Kannada Nagari Nagari Nagari	
6.	Ramachandra	Saluva	Rama/Chandra	Copper	Kannada	
7.	Vijayaraya I	Saluva	Vija/ya Bukka/raya	Copper	Nagari	
8.	Mallikarjuna	Saluva	Malli/Karjuna/raya	Silver	Nagari	
9.	Krishnadevaraya	Tuluva	Sri Krishna/raya	Copper	Kannada	
10.	Sadasivaraya	Tuluva	Prata/pa Sa/dasiva	Copper	Nagari	
11.	Alia Ramaraya	Tuluva	Rama/raya	Copper	Nagari	
12.	Tirumalaraya I	Aravidu	Cha/lama/raya Sri Ti/rumala/raya	Copper Copper	Nagari Nagari	
13.	Srirangaraya I	Aravidu	Srirangaraya	Copper	Kannada	
14.	Venkatapatiraya III	Aravidu	Sri/Venkata/raya	Copper	Kannada	
15.	Srirangaraya II	Aravidu	Chikara/yalu Chikkara/yalu	Copper Copper	Telugu Kannada	
16.	Srirangaraya III	Aravidu	Sri/Ram/ga	Copper	Kannada	

GARUDA TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Harihara I	Sangama	Ha	Copper	Nagari	Ha for Harihara
2.	Bukkaraya I	Sangama	Sri Vi/(ra) Buka/(r)raya	Gold	Kannada	
3.	Harihara II	Sangama	Sri Vi/ra Hari/hara	Gold	Kannada	
4.	Devaraya I	Sangama	Sri Prata/pa deva/raya	Copper	Nagari	
5.	Krishnadevaraya	Tuluva	Sri Pra/tapa Krishna/raya	Copper	Nagari	
6.	Achyutaraya	Tuluva	Sri Achyuta/raya Prata/pachyuta	Copper Copper	Nagari Nagari	
7.	Sadasivaraya	Tuluva	Sri Sada/sivara/yalu Sri Prata/pa Sadasiva/raya	Copper Copper	Nagari Nagari	
8.	Tirumalaraya I	Aravidu	Sri Ti/tumala/raya Cha/lama/raya	Copper Copper	Nagari Nagari	
9.	Ramaraya Venkatadri	Aravidu	Ramaraya/Venkatadri	Copper	Kannada	
10.	Srirangaraya I	Aravidu	Sri/Rangara/ya	Copper	Kannada	
11.	Venkatapatiraya II	Aravidu	Vemkata	Gold	Nagari	
12.	Venkatapatiraya III	Aravidu	Ramaraja/Venkata/raya Sri/Ramaraja/Venkata/raya	Copper Copper	Kannada Nagari	

GANDABERUNDA TYPE

S.No.	King	Dynasty	Reverse	Metal	Legend	Remarks
1.	Achyutaraya	Tuluva	Sri Pra/tapachyuta/raya Sri Pra/tapachyuta/raya	Gold Copper	Nagari Nagari	
2.	Sadasivaraya	Tuluva	Sri Prata/Pa Sadasiva/raya	Copper	Nagari	
3.	Srirangaraya I	Aravidu	Sri/Ranga ra/ya	Copper	Nagari Kannada	

INTRODUCTION

The foundation of Vijayanagara Empire is an epoch-making event in the South Indian history. It combined in itself, the areas of the Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam people. During this period South India witnessed a radical change in the political and cultural field. After the Gupta dynasty, the *Rayas* of Vijayanagara were the first to issue gold coins in large numbers and denominations. Hence this period is referred to as the 'golden age of South India'. It shaped the destiny of the South Indian people for three centuries. It was the last important Hindu kingdom in South India.

The Vijayanagara Empire was established by Harihara I and Bukkaraya I in 1336 A. D. with the advice of sage Vidyanatha. They were the sons of Sangama and hence, their dynasty was named after him. The successors of Harihara I and Bukkaraya I ruled up to 1486 A. D. and gave place to the Saluvas under Narasimha. Narasimha and his family ruled from 1486 to 1505 A. D. Then came the Tuluvas to the Vijayanagara throne. In this dynasty, Sri Krishnadevaraya was most outstanding emperor of the Vijayanagara empire for over three hundred years during 14th to 17th centuries and their rule lasted up to 1570 A. D. Then came the Aravidu dynasty who ruled up to 1685 A.D. Though the dynasties were different, all these four dynasties ruled over a major part of South India, with variations in the extent of empire.

Coins are one of the main sources to know the history of mankind. To avoid the inconvenience of barter system, coins emerged all over India. The earliest coins in India were the Punch marked coins. Generally, these coins are dated from 6th century B.C to 5th Century B.C. which was issued with natural symbols. After the Punch marked coins, a visible change occurred during the time of Indo-Greeks, as the coins were marked with portrait symbols. Later, indigenous rulers started issuing their coins with inscription primarily written in Brahmi script. During the time of Guptas, issuance of the coins reached its zenith. This tradition was followed by the succeeding dynasties like Cholas, Kakatiyas, and Hoysalas etc. Coinage of India was primarily marked by pictorial devices either in the form of gods and goddesses, natural figures and the inscriptions on coins is rarely found. But in the medieval period, a great change took place, discarding the pictorial devices on the coins and a new language (Arabic) was introduced on the coins and this

tradition gradually developed in North India. Finally it spread to almost all the parts of the country and it is known as Islamic tradition.

The emergence of the Vijayanagara Empire heralded a new phase in the development of the coinage and currency system in the history of South India. The Vijayanagara period witnessed important changes. They continued the old tradition of India, where pictorial devices became the major feature of the coinage. Earlier coinage had Brahmi, Kharosti, Devanagari and Arabic scripts. But Vijayanagara coins contain legends in three scripts i.e., Devanagari, Kannada and Telugu. The richness of gold coins, the innumerable types of gold and copper coins, the rich variety of symbols, the diversity of gods and goddesses, appropriate legends in various scripts and the technical superiority of the coins deserve special attention. No doubt South India had a well-established coinage tradition by the time the Vijayanagara Empire was born but, the sudden developments were noticed during the period which gave the coinage of the period a unique place. Harihara I and Bukkaraya I, the originators of the Vijayanagara kingdom, had the coinage of the Hoyasalas, Kakatiyas and the later Pandyas for their model. Naturally, Harihara I and Bukkaraya I derived great inspiration from the Hoyasala coins which indicated religious significance and purpose so close to the hearts of the founders of Vijayanagara. Even the names of the coins of the Hoyasalas such as *gadyana*, *pana*, *haga*, *visa*, *bele* were literally lifted by the Vijayanagara rulers.

The Vijayanagara monarch had a separate department in charge of minting of coins. The main mint was located in Hampi. The Vijayanagara kings issued a large number of coins in gold, silver and copper. However, the silver currency is rare. Most of them embossed the images of gods and goddesses, animals, birds, state emblem etc. Special coins were made in commemoration of occasions like triumphs over other kingdoms. The names of the gold coins were *gadyana*, *varaha*, *mada*, *pratapa*, *kati*, *ponnu*, *haga* and *pana*. Silver coins are called *tara*, and the copper coins were called *jital* or *kasu*. On the reverse side most of the coins king's name was inscribed. The Saluva rulers did not issue any type of coins, because of little span of their rule but the remaining Vijayanagara rulers issued a vast and varied number of coins.

Previous Works

The findings of the Vijayanagara coins have been published in the form of catalogues, monographs, articles and journals. The most important among the catalogues is the one prepared by N. Ramesan, entitled *A Catalogue of the Vijayanagara Coins of the Andhra Pradesh, Government Museum, Hyderabad, 1962*. He catalogued all the Vijayanagara coins found in the Andhra Pradesh Archaeological Museum at Hyderabad. After a brief introduction, he examined each type of a coin in a chronological order wherein useful details and descriptions are furnished. This is followed by a detailed description and a detailed catalogue of 2134 selected coins of various kings. This contains the size, weight, metal content on the obverse and reverse sides. The work is well illustrated with line drawings as well as photographs of the coins. But he did not touch the cultural dimension of the coinage. Nevertheless, this is one of the most useful catalogues of the Vijayanagara coins so far published. The Government Museum at Chennai has been doing great service to the study of numismatics by publishing various catalogues on coins in the museum. In keeping with this practice, the Museum has published a catalogue prepared by N. Sankara Narayana, entitled *Catalogue of Vijayanagar Coins in the Madras Government Museum, Madras, 1977*. This catalogue is an improvement over the earlier catalogues as it includes some new types of coins. The author has discussed the political history of Vijayanagara as a background, followed by the typological description of coins. After a typological study of the coins, he has given a description of 645 coins of various kings. In addition to the details of size, weight, metal, obverse and reverse, sides some useful remarks are also included. The usefulness of this catalogue is increased by the details it furnishes on the obverse and reverse of each coin included in the catalogue. In his work *The Coins of Karnataka*, A. V. Narasimha Murthy devoted an entire chapter to Vijayanagara coins referring to various symbols, gods and goddesses, the legends and examined each type in chronological order. Prof A. V. Narasimha Murthy also worked on coins of Karnataka entitled, *Coins and Currency System in Karnataka, Mysore, 1997*. It deals with the development of Karnataka coinage and currency system in a comprehensive manner of various dynasties. Making use of epigraphical and literary data to understand the system of currency is a unique feature of his work. K. Ganesh and Dr. M. Girijapathi worked on Vijayanagara coins entitled *The Coins of Vijayanagara Empire, Bangalore,*

1997. It deals with the obverse and reverse details. Michael Mitchiner has worked on coins entitled *The Coinage and History of Southern India Karnataka–Andhra*, pt. 1, London, 1998. Dr. M. Girijapathi worked on coins entitled “*The Coinage and History of Vijayanagara Empire*”, Bangalore, 2009. This book attempts to record the coins of Vijayanagara empire from first ruler Harihara I to last ruler Sri Rangaraya III. This book contains obverse, reverse, metal, legend, size and weight of the coins. The photographs are strikingly clear.

Among the monographs, the most important work on Vijayanagara coins authored by Dr. M. H. Krishna appeared in Annual Reports of the Mysore Archaeological Department published while he was its editor during the year 1930-1932. E. J. Rapson wrote a book entitled *Indian Coins*, Varanasi, 1969. In this book he made an attempt to study the types and symbols of the Vijayanagara coins. One of the very early accounts of the coins of the dynasty was prepared by R. S. Panchamukhi entitled *A Vijayanagara Sexcentenary Volume*, (pp.101-118). After a brief introduction, he discussed the important types of gold coins of this dynasty. T. V. Mahalingam included as appendix on the coinage of Vijayanagara to his book on Vijayanagara. A stray reference to coins found in inscriptions was also made use by foreign travelers in writing their travelogues or travel accounts. V. A. Smith in his works *The Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum*, Oxford, 1974 and *Coins of Ancient India*, devoted some chapters to the study of the coins of Vijayanagara. Sir Walter Elliot, in his famous work *Coins of Southern India*, Delhi, 1975, mentioned a rare instance of the *Dodda Varaha* of Krishnadevaraya and under the subtitle *Last Great Hindu Kingdom of Vijayanagara* represented a good background of the political history of Vijayanagara dynasty followed by comments on the coins of Vijayanagara rulers. He described the details of obverse and reverse of the coins. T. Desikachari worked on *South Indian Coins*, (New Delhi, 1984), an important work in which a very short section is devoted to study of Vijayanagara coins.

The articles published in Journals like *South Indian Numismatic Society*, *Numismatic Digest*, *Indian Antiquary* and *Indian Numismatics* are also most useful to study the Vijayanagara coins. A number of foreign travelers such as Nicolo Conti, Abdul Razzak, Barbosa, Nuniz, and Domingo Paes had visited the Vijayanagara during various

periods and their writings have been the major source of the Vijayanagara history. The above authors focused more on the aspects related to coin Catalogues. Nobody has done the cultural study based on the Vijayanagara coins.

Aim and Scope

The main aim of the present work is to make **A Cultural Study of the Vijayanagara Coins**. Various aspects of coins have been studied by a good number of Indian and foreign scholars. The earlier works described in detail the coin catalogue. The present work aims to study the various aspects of culture i. e., Religion reflected on Vijayanagara coins, Study of Legends, Epigraphic data and Foreign travellers data on Vijayanagara coins. The present study is restricted to Vijayanagara coins only.

Sources

Sources for the present work comprise viz. primary and secondary data. The archaeological sources form the main basis of the work in general and numismatic data in particular. The primary sources include coin catalogues, inscriptions, art and architecture, travellers accounts. Secondary source comprise the literature and published works. The Vijayanagara coins are preserved in different museums in Southern India like Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Museum, Andhra Pradesh Government Museum, Hyderabad, Tamil Nadu Government Museum Madras, Archaeological Museum Mysore, Indian Institute of Research in Numismatic Studies, Nasik and National Museum, Janapath, New Delhi in north India. However, secondary sources are also taken into account, particularly as supportive and corroborative evidence.

Methodology

The present work is based on the physical study of coins, belonging to the Vijayanagara period, which were preserved in different Archaeological Museums. Secondary sources like the Vijayanagara coin catalogues and Monographs etc. were also taken into account as supportive and corroborative evidence. Vijayanagara coins, inscriptions and script provide significant basis for the study. The data are arranged chronologically and typologically.

Organisation of the Thesis

The First chapter is in the form of **Introduction**. It deals with a brief history of Vijayanagara Empire, brief introduction to coinage in Indian context, coinage of Vijayanagara rulers, previous works, aim and scope, sources, methodology and organization of the thesis.

The Second chapter entitled '**Religion reflected on Vijayanagara coins**', is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the Saivism. The second section deals with the Vaishnavism which includes gods and goddesses and animal motifs. The relevant photographs are attached where-ever necessary.

The Third chapter is entitled **Study of Legends**. It deals with Script and Language which includes Kannada, Nagari and Telugu Scripts. The relevant photographs are attached where-ever necessary.

The Fourth chapter deals with the **Epigraphic data and Foreign Travellers data on Vijayanagara coins**.

The Fifth chapter presents a **Summary of Findings**. This is followed by an exhaustive Bibliography in which includes literary sources, secondary sources and articles are connected with the work is provided. The photographs of coins are included in the thesis where-ever necessary.